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ABSTRACT

As the American population ages, society has grown more concerned about using older adults' skills and experience so they remain active, contributing members. Noting that work in child care for appropriate older adults is both natural and timely, this manual provides practical, concrete steps for implementing the guidelines of the Productive Employment of Older Adults in Child Care Project. The manual is divided into 8 chapters that provide the practical information needed to develop a child care environment with productively employed older workers. Following the introduction, chapter 2 presents the rationale for the project. This chapter shows how older adults can address major needs of young children and provide an ideal child care labor force. Chapters 3 through 8 discuss issues related to productive employment of older adults in child care, including: (1) recruiting and hiring; (2) orienting older workers; (4) preparing the staff for the older worker's first day; (5) matching the older adults with classrooms and child care staff; (6) training older workers; (7) developing career ladders; (8) building coalitions and networks; and (9) developing a dissemination and publication plan. Appendices include the guidelines for the Productive Employment of Older Adults in Child Care Project, child development-associated functional areas, a bibliography and practical resources, and a description of the project's field test sites. (Contains 17 references.) (AA)

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Practitioner's Manual

for

THE PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER ADULTS IN CHILD CARE

By

Sally M. Newman, Ph.D.

Karen Vander Ven, Ph.D.

Christopher R. Ward, Ph.D.

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**GENERATIONS TOGETHER:
An Intergenerational Studies Program**

University Center for Social and Urban Research
University of Pittsburgh

The project, guidelines, and practitioner's manual funded by the Florence V. Burden Foundation

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"WANTED: CHILD CARE WORKERS AGE 55 AND UP"

The child care administrator in the story that followed this *New York Times* headline asked whether recruiting and hiring older workers could contribute to quality staffing by providing a new population of stable, competent care providers. You may have wondered the same thing.

When we at Generations Together saw this article describing the challenges child care administrators face in finding sufficient and committed staff, we reacted with great interest.

"Why *not* older child care workers?" we thought. Our years of experience conducting programs involving young children and older adults showed that both groups benefit greatly from their contact with each other. Older child care providers could bring a stable, enriching, stimulating aspect to any child care program. Wouldn't it be important to encourage this trend of hiring older adults to serve as child care staff?

Reading the article confirmed our ideas. For optimal benefit, older adults' special attributes should be recognized and utilized. Like staff of any age, they should receive proper training, supervision, and financial compensation.

These ideas guided our planning of "Developing Guidelines for the Productive Employment of Older Adults in Child Care," a project to both write guidelines and to aid administrators, directors, and similar personnel in applying standards that would support the guidelines (see Appendix A). To carry out the project, we identified child care and gerontology practitioners in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic regions and, with funding from the Florence V. Burden Foundation, sought their input and review to develop the guidelines and this manual.

The guidelines are organized into categories that include every major step in identifying, recruiting, training, developing, and retaining older adults as paid child care providers. Statements under each category reflect a recommended standard for that category. This manual provides concrete suggestions for carrying out the guidelines and is organized parallel to them. Examples of activities or approaches that others have found useful as they implemented the guidelines are included.

We believe that effective use of the guidelines and manual can improve child care programs by meeting the field's need for quality child care employees through the positive, productive integration of older adults. We recognize, too, that many aspects of the guidelines apply to providers of any age.

PRODUCTIVITY IN OLD AGE

As the American population ages, we have grown more concerned about using older adults' skills and experience so they remain active, contributing members of society. We know that:

- Older adults can continue to be productive members of the work force;
- More than half of all older adults would enjoy some type of employment;
- Most older adults are physically well and active, have a lifetime of knowledge and wisdom, and feel motivated to work at useful, meaningful jobs.

Work in child care for the appropriate older adults is both natural and timely. Throughout history, older adults have been nurturers, transmitters of culture, and positive role models for the young. Developmentally, they need to leave a legacy, a mark of who they are, to future generations. In the words of an older adult employed in the U.S. Department of Labor Child Development Center:

"Older adults have the distinct advantage of having young adult years and middle age behind them. Unencumbered by the problems facing younger adults, they can devote their full attention on the job to the kids, and re-enter completely the world kids live in — the wonder, the fantasy, the openness to everything sparkling and new."

As child care workers, older adults provide unique benefits to young children. They bring security, consistency, dependability, empathy, and acceptance. They bring patience, time, love, and understanding. These attributes are essential support to young children's social, emotional, and cognitive growth. Moreover, as child care workers, older adults gain self-esteem and life satisfaction, are physically healthier, have a greater sense of well being, and feel more needed and part of something important.

THE NEED FOR CHILD CARE WORKERS

Child care offers excellent employment prospects for older adults, both because the child care field is growing and because staff turnover is high. From 1977 to 1985, the number of working mothers placing their children in child care centers more than doubled (Neugebauer, 1989). Moreover, the demand for child care is expected to increase further. By 1995, two-thirds of all pre-school children will have mothers in the work force (Goffin, 1988).

Paralleling this expanding need for child care is a growing shortage of child care workers. By the late 1980s, staff were leaving their jobs at rates three times higher than they were ten years earlier (Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1989). Equally critical, this increasing turnover rate comes when the U.S. Bureau of Labor reports the pool of young workers, which traditionally supplies most entry-level child care staff, is shrinking dramatically (Collins, 1987).

Older adults are already part of a solution to the child care staffing crisis. The number of adults age 55 and over employed in child care has been increasing. By 1987, older workers represented 25% of family day care providers, 13% of the staff at child care centers, and 6% of the staff in preschools (Collins, 1987). But to look upon older workers as an unpaid, or poorly paid, labor pool, provided with little or no preparation for the job, and with insensitive working conditions, will diminish their great potential.

The guidelines and this accompanying manual address the issues related to older adult employment in child care. They help ensure that:

- Children receive better quality care from a committed, intergenerational labor force properly prepared, utilized, and rewarded;
- Children's emotional, social, and intellectual development is enhanced by older adults' rich experience, skills, understanding, and nurturing;
- Older adults benefit from the knowledge that they are contributing to society by doing valuable work for which they are appropriately prepared, compensated, and supervised.

Early in 1990, Generations Together began to work with a task force of aging and child development professionals to develop the productive employment guidelines. The task force consisted of experts in child care, child and adult development, gerontology, adult training, and employment policy from Massachusetts, the District of Columbia, New York, and Pennsylvania. Defining older adults as persons 55 and older, the guidelines include information on training, supervision, compensation, recognition, career development, and other aspects of meaningful employment. Four child care centers with diverse staffs and constituencies field tested the guidelines during 1990-91. As it developed the guidelines, the task force decided that child care practitioners needed a manual to implement the guidelines.

The primary purpose of this manual is to give practical, concrete steps to implement the guidelines. It is designed for those who work in child care centers in positions where they recruit, hire, train, or supervise older adults. In addition, it will be useful for persons working in older adult employment; for those who train older workers or child care supervisors; and for administrators, policy makers, and others who wish to apply the guidelines in more detail.

GUIDELINES: PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER ADULTS IN CHILD CARE PROJECT

THE PRACTITIONER'S MANUAL

PURPOSE

FORMAT	The manual is divided into four sections that provide practical information you need to develop a child care environment with productively employed older workers. The sections include: • A rationale for the project - "Why Older Adults In Child Care?" • A sequence of chapters that describes the steps that result in productive employment of older adults in child care; • A bibliography and practical resources (see Appendices E and F); • Descriptions of the project's field test sites (see Appendix B).
USE	The manual will be most effective if you use specific chapters, or parts of chapters, in conjunction with the appropriate sections of the guidelines (see Appendix A). Moreover, we encourage careful consideration of the chapter on "Why Older Adults in Child Care?" and liberal use of the manual's bibliography and resources. It is important to note that this manual is intended to help child care administrators achieve quality child care by effectively integrating older adults as members of their staff. Effective integration presumes that older adults will be empowered to provide young children with the appropriate nurturing, care, and support needed for healthy development.

II

WHY OLDER ADULTS IN CHILD CARE?

This section shows not only how older adults — properly prepared and utilized — provide an ideal child care labor force, but also how they reflect both special and generic qualities common to all child care workers that meet the needs of children and contribute to a quality program.

After reviewing this section, you will:

- Understand the demographic and developmental characteristics of older adults that can enhance their value as members of your child care staff;
- Recognize major needs of young children that child care workers can address.

Older adults—persons over 60 years of age by the federal government's definition—are the fastest growing group in the United States, representing 16 percent of our population. By 2030, they will comprise approximately *20 percent* of the nation's population!

Information about the life circumstances of older adults is germane to their potential employment as child care staff:

- Approximately 1,000,000 indicate an interest in and availability to work;
- Sixty percent assess their health as good or excellent;
- Many need jobs for financial reasons, and *19 percent* live in poverty or near poverty;
- They are physically and intellectually capable of holding down responsible positions;
- They are flexible in expectations about hours, work schedules, and number of days worked;
- Thirty percent are geographically separated from younger family members;
- Older adults as workers in child care are typically represented by a population of persons 55 or over.

Human beings continue to grow and develop throughout their life spans. Older adults, like persons of any other general age group, have their unique characteristics and needs that, if addressed, can enhance their productivity. In particular, older adults have a need to, and can, perform the following roles:

- To show active concern for and nurture younger generations;
- To transmit culture and values;
- To leave a legacy to society;
- To be vital and active members of the community;

WHO ARE OUR OLDER ADULTS?

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OLDER ADULTS

NEEDS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

- To continue to carry out activities that are central to their adulthood;
- To share skills, knowledge, and life experiences;
- To provide comfort and stability to families.

The decline of these roles in our mobile, youth-oriented society has left a void for many older adults. For these persons, work in child care can be fulfilling, useful, and productive to *children*, to *parents*, and to *staff*.

When considering how older adults can contribute to child care, it is crucial to remember children's needs and their approaches to learning. Although most children live in warm, stable families with parents, grandparents, and other nurturers invested in their development, many other children are less fortunate and live in disorganized, disinterested, fragmented, and often dysfunctional families. These children may experience indifference or neglect and their environments may be unresponsive and unengaging. They may be exposed to violence and general chaos in their neighborhood. Traumatic experiences may challenge their emotional well-being and inhibit their ability to learn.

Today, all children need:

- Basic nurturance from a warm, gentle person;
- Stable and predictable relationships;
- Interesting and stimulating activities;
- Attention, interest, and investment;
- Support for learning;
- Special support in times of trouble;
- Exposure to cultural, ethnic, and generational diversity.

Early childhood professionals of any age can meet most children's needs. Older adults — by reason of their age — may be in a position to provide unique opportunities to children, parents, and staff.

For Children, Older Adults Provide:

- Learning and understanding about aging;
- Stimulation and enrichment as they introduce or share their interests and hobbies;
- Support for cognitive development as they share their experiences, knowledge, life skills, cultural, and historical perspectives;
- Feelings of security, predictability, and safety as the quieter and gentler demeanor of many older adults help to "settle" a room;
- Nurturing and the opportunity for bonding or forming special relationships as older adults reach out to establish links with the young children and their parents;
- Special support at times of stress, as older adults are often asked to give special attention to a needy child, a task that appears most suitable and rewarding for an older adult.

THE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION OF OLDER ADULTS

EDITH, AN OLDER ADULT CHILD CARE PROVIDER IN A PROJECT FIELD TEST SITE

On cold winter days, Edith, our 84-year old aide, would come into the center, close the door quickly against the chill New England winter and lean against the radiator to warm her bare hands and the upper parts of her legs that knee socks couldn't protect. She would hang up her thin coat and come into the room to begin the day's work.

Edith was a big woman who took a lot of space at a child's table or on a small chair in the housekeeping or block area. I was resentful of this until I began observing the interactions between her and the children. Over a period of years, I came to perceive her as the children did. They always had the innate sense to climb or walk around a hill rather than to think they could move it. The children incorporated her presence in many ways. When they were building a box for the guinea pig, they would put it in her lap for safekeeping. When they had disagreements, she would help negotiate. When they were hurt or feeling vulnerable, they would brush against her, waiting for her arm.

PERSPECTIVES OF OLDER ADULTS TOWARDS CHILD CARE

For Parents, Older Adults Provide:

- The benefits of an extended family;
- Support in their own tasks in rearing children;
- Positive role models;
- Insights and understanding of parenting issues;
- Friendship and compassion.

For Staff, Older Adults Provide:

- New stimulation and perspectives on work with young children;
- Insights about children and parenting;
- Support in their work, both in sharing the tasks of child care and in enriching the program or curriculum;
- Opportunities for more diversified relationships;
- Friendship and collegiality.

In sum, older adults bring numerous benefits to the children and adults in child care programs as evidenced in anecdotal reports of their energy, warmth, and enrichment. To gain these benefits requires active recruitment of appropriate older adult job candidates. The following section gives you specific suggestions on how to do this.

All persons working with children — no matter what their formal qualifications — bring to that work their own attitudes, reflecting their individual background and experience. Similarly, older adults bring a diversity of attitudes and ideas to child care settings. These attitudes need to be sensitively utilized and, as would be true with any worker, occasionally modified to maximize their contribution to program quality.

These perspectives may include:

- The feeling that having been a child or parent is sufficient preparation for employment as a child care worker, or that instinct, common sense, or “the way I treated my own children” is sufficient;
- Opinions on discipline that may differ from those of younger staff and parents;
- Skepticism about why child care is needed and why parents would place their children in out-of-home care when, “in their day”, mothers remained at home to care for their young children.

This array of perspectives can bring energy to your child care center but must be integrated into an overall practice that shows different ways of doing things while

maintaining developmentally appropriate practice. It is important that you orient all new employees to agency policy, philosophy, and practices, and provide opportunities for attitudes to be discussed so that behaviors are within appropriate boundaries.

Training, orientation, and ongoing supervision are all ways to insure that your entire staff can make positive contributions and gain positive rewards from their work experience. The following section of this manual will provide you with resources for doing this.

BRINGING OLDER ADULTS INTO CHILD CARE

III

One of the most important and challenging aspects of productive employment of older adults in child care is finding those persons, in sufficient number, who can best meet your center's needs. Fortunately, the experience of others has yielded a number of useful recruitment tips and strategies.

After reviewing this section, you will:

- Be familiar with effective recruitment strategies for obtaining older adult workers;
- Be more aware of older adults' interests and needs in order to prepare appropriate recruitment materials;
- Acquire ideas for interviewing, screening, hiring, and placing older adult workers.

RECRUITMENT

Effective recruitment strategies appeal directly to potential older workers. They are carefully planned, relate to older adults' recognized needs and interests, offer experiences that are attractive to older adults, and are framed in positive, attention-getting messages.

There's Something About Children...

Chatter and learning—Little hands to hold. Do you want to read stories, play games, give lots of TLC? We need people to work in our child care center with children three months to five years. Set your own schedule. 1/2 block from the Metro. Call...

This inviting ad in a community paper, *The Senior Advocate*, produced about 20 inquiries. Five people came in for interviews, including one who the director decided to hire.

Sam, a 59-year-old writer who had worked for the National Geographic Society and in advertising, responded to what he termed "the most inviting little ad" in *The Senior Advocate*. At the Child Development Center, Sam began work with four- and five-year-olds three days a week, coming in on the subway after he finished his morning writing.

"The main factor in child care work, besides having a love of children, is having a place outside the home you can enjoy reporting to regularly, where you feel useful and needed and can learn as much from the children as they teach you. Even more." - Older adult worker

The needs of older adults to consider as you develop your recruitment plans include:

- Adequate pay and benefits;
- Accessibility of the work place: for example, proximity to public transportation and parking facilities;
- Flexibility; for example, part-time work and individual scheduling;
- Training to develop job-related skills;
- Personalized supervision and support;
- Recognition and respect;
- A sense of "making a difference";
- A comfortable environment.

Many older adults can bring diverse interests to the work place. These interests may include:

- Learning about children and child care;
- Meeting new people;
- Sharing particular skills and experiences;
- Working in a responsive setting;
- Beginning a new career.

Job Descriptions and Criteria for Employment

Before developing job opening announcements, be certain you define the available positions, what they involve, and the kinds of qualifications that you desire (see Appendices G-2 and G-6). With this information in hand, you can develop and implement your recruitment plans.

Targeting

There are many subgroups within that broad category of persons 55 and older that can be targeted as sources of workers. For example:

- Persons who have not been in the paid work force;
- Pre-retirees;
- Retirees;
- Persons with special skills in areas such as crafts, arts, nutrition, carpentry, literature/storytelling, office and administrative skills, and many others.

NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF OLDER ADULTS

DESIGNING RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

IMPLEMENTING A RECRUITMENT PLAN

Experienced recruiters have found that multiple approaches, scheduled closely together, are more likely to identify older adults interested in child care work (see Appendix G-1). Multiple approaches result in wide visibility, generate broad community interest and discussion, are seen in a variety of familiar settings, and often convince an older adult who may be reluctant to try something new that "this might be for me." Such approaches can include:

Print and Visual Media

- Distribute posters and flyers within the community in malls, libraries, drug stores, restaurants, and medical and dental offices;
- Advertise and or place articles in local newspapers and in neighborhood and church bulletins;
- Air public service announcements (PSAs) on radio and television;
- Arrange for interviews on local radio and television talk shows or news programs;
- Encourage television stations to film older workers in action at early childhood programs and interviews with children, parents, and administrators about the benefits of older adults working in child care.

Contact with Community Social and Educational Organizations

- Present your program at aging organizations such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and older adult church groups;
- Send job opening announcements to higher education and adult education programs at community and four-year colleges;
- Make announcements and presentations at community programs, i.e., YWCAs and YMCAs, senior centers, libraries, and garden and other special interest clubs.

Informal Networks

- Contact acquaintances and other older adults already employed in child care;
- Conduct open houses for neighborhood older adults including grandparents and great grandparents of children in child care centers;

Government Agencies

- Contact the local Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) agency for help in finding older adult trainees. JTPA is a federal program that provides job training to income-eligible younger persons and older adults (see Appendix F);
- Contact the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Title V representative who can help identify older adults interested in child care training. Title V is a program of the Older Americans Act that recruits income-eligible older adults for a subsidized training/placement experience in preparation for unsubsidized employment. Placing ads in an AAA newsletter is a useful recruitment strategy (see Appendix F).

"I was recruited into the work by a small ad...in a senior citizens' paper and I highly recommend that type of ad."- Older adult worker

Tips For Printed Materials

In preparing your recruitment strategies, consider the style and content of your presentations. The following tips improve the print pieces for recruiting older workers:

- Readable size (large print);
- Clear, descriptive language, used in brief statements that avoid jargon;
- Spot drawings or other creative art that appeals to older adults and includes racial and gender diversity;
- "Airy" design with attractive placement of text;
- Attractive, colored paper with sharply contrasting ink for high visibility;
- Bullets, rather than long paragraphs, in the text;
- Limited number of folds in brochures.

The Recruitment Message

The following content will enable older adults to decide if they are suitable for child care work or work at a particular center. It is appropriate for both spoken and visual presentations:

- Description of benefits of working in child care (whenever possible, the description should come from older workers themselves);
- Clearly defined, specific job descriptions with specific tasks for which the older adults are being recruited;

HIRING

- Convenient ways to reply: a telephone number, a tear-off (if using a flyer), an address reply card, or the name of a contact person;
- Information about the child care center's population and philosophy;
- Language suitable for targeted subgroups.

Once you identify a pool of applicants, screen them to determine their appropriateness for work in child care. Before you initiate screening procedures, however, establish a set of consistent criteria and procedures. Child care centers have found the following criteria important in their selection of older workers:

- Willingness to be trained;
- Openness to new ideas;
- Interest in children;
- Experience with young children;
- Previous child care or early childhood training;
- Special content interests and skills appropriate for child care centers, i.e., art, music, movement, hobbies, food preparation, ethnic specialties, needed office or support skills;
- Flexible time schedule (availability to work part-time or full time);
- Positive attitudes towards the need for child care.

SCREENING

There are several screening steps before you make the final hiring decision. Throughout these procedures be sensitive to the needs and concerns of the older adult applicants, many of whom will be experiencing these procedures for the first time.

These steps may include:

- Gathering written documents and personal references which describe applicants' background, character, and experiences;
- Obtaining clearances on criminal and child abuse records (check your local, state, and federal regulations);
- Completing written or verbal standardized attitudinal surveys;
- Observing applicants' in direct interaction with a group of young children;
- Interviewing for income eligibility for federally sponsored programs (JTPA, Title V). This interview is scheduled by a federal program representative.

CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

Since an interview is critical and probably the most difficult aspect of the hiring process for the employer and the applicant, it should be carefully and thoughtfully conducted. The interview should provide time for you to gather information about the prospective older worker while also providing information about your program that will help the applicant decide if yours is an appropriate work site. To conduct a good interview, consider three areas:

Setting the Stage

- Conduct the interviews one-to-one;
- Provide a non-threatening setting to help the older adult feel comfortable and relaxed. For some older adults, the interview may be a new experience and will be most productive in a friendly and relaxed environment.

What To Look For

- Listen carefully to what the older person says. Their replies give cues about attitudes towards child care and towards children. For example, a person who says, "Children need to be kept in line" might indicate someone overly concerned with discipline;
- Probe unclear answers for further information, i.e., "Can you tell me more about that?" or "How would you handle that situation if you encountered it?"
- Note comments such as "I've raised five children of my own and I don't have to learn anymore, all kids are the same" or "I wish I'd known this when I was raising my children";
- Watch for red flags, such as "When a child misbehaves, I'll put him in the corner";
- Assess openness to change and interest in new learning in those workers whose attitudes may seem inappropriate (training often results in significant change in attitudes);

Providing and Gathering Information

- Provide an opportunity for the older worker to ask questions about your center;
- Describe in detail your center's mission, philosophy, and program. It is as important that the candidate learn about your center as it is for you to learn about the candidate;

-
- Gather information from the older adult about his or her talents, skills, and interest in the context of center activities and needs (see Appendix G-5);
 - Though some older adults may not be suited for direct work with children, bear in mind that their "indirect" skills (maintenance, public relations, secretarial, or administrative) may benefit your agency.

THE STORY OF A CARPENTER IN A CHILD CARE CENTER

An eighty-year-old carpenter wanted part-time work at a child care center. He offered to help repair children's wooden toys and wooden furniture and, if really needed, to help build some new furniture.

"I really don't think I belong in the classroom with the children since I have had no experience with children. You see, I have never been married! But I would like to help somehow."

During three years of repairing and building, a mutual love developed between Bob and the children. It is not uncommon to see Bob and the children fixing and talking together. They share stories, plan new projects, and work with "age-appropriate" tools.

By recognizing Bob's skills and being sensitive to his needs, the center helped a competent "non-child-oriented" older person become a productive and well-loved employee.

ORIENTING OLDER WORKERS

An older worker's employment success may depend on how well your agency orients and matches that person to a specific job and to the staff with whom s/he will be working. Orientation to the site is critical. It should take place prior to the first day of work and include clearly presented information for the new worker and introductions to other staff. This opportunity to "get to know each other" helps make other staff comfortable and accepting as well as setting the stage for the new worker.

The opportunity to learn about the site helps the new worker feel welcome and valued. Your orientation should prepare the older adult to begin work feeling knowledgeable and comfortable. Consider the following ideas:

Physical Characteristics of the Center

- Location of amenities (Coffee room, rest rooms, telephones, etc);
- Where to report;
- Room arrangements;
- Safety procedures.

Management of the Center

- Staff roles, functions, and responsibilities;
- Staff expectations of the older worker's role, function, and responsibilities;
- Organizational structure (who reports to whom, and who does what);
- Center's rules and regulations;
- Center's philosophy on child care, child development, and young children's learning.

Preparing the Older Worker for the First Day

- Show prepared videos or actual classroom interactions that demonstrate appropriate practices;
- Describe the center's special routines and workers' responsibilities within these routines (transition times);
- Give "immediate tips" on handling situations involving children in the center.

PREPARING THE STAFF FOR THE OLDER WORKERS' FIRST DAY

Send a memo to other staff and to parents, introducing the new worker, providing brief experience and biographical information, and describing the older worker's job in the program. If possible, introduce the worker informally to all direct service, maintenance, and office staff. You might hold an informal coffee to welcome the older worker. If new younger workers are added to staff at the same time, both groups should be prepared and welcomed together as new colleagues (see Appendix G-3 for preliminary activities).

MATCHING THE OLDER ADULT WITH CLASSROOMS AND CHILD CARE STAFF

It is most important that you be aware of the match or "goodness of fit" between older adults and their classroom team. All employees perform best in situations where they feel comfortable, respected, and able to utilize their skills effectively. Although there is no set formula (sometimes unlikely matches work out the best), the following suggestions might be useful:

Assess Older Adults' Activity Level

An energetic older adult might enjoy being in a class of active four-year-olds. If a less active adult is physically strong, he or she might actually serve to bring an element of calmness and stability to a class of highly energetic youngsters and be a special resource to those children.

Consider the Children's Ages and Needs

Less active older adults may be more effective with younger children, i.e., to hold infants, to serve as a secure base for toddlers, or to read stories to all children.

Consider the Styles and Personality of the Staff

It may be appropriate to match older adults and staff who are somewhat dissimilar in overall style, i.e., a strong personality in the older adult may work best with a sensitive, soft, confident, and experienced child care provider; a younger staff member should not feel overpowered. Conversely, a strong personality in a staff member may intimidate a more passive older adult. Open discussion on values and styles should be encouraged.

Assess the Needs of the Classroom

A classroom which is short-handed, or might be strengthened by an older adult's special skills, may be the first classroom in which to place a new older worker. However, all classrooms can benefit from the presence of a sensitive and well-trained older adult.

Discuss With the Older Adults Their Interests and Perceptions

Without making a commitment to place them in a certain room, ask the older adults, after they have seen the various options, what their preferences are.

Consider Types of Roles That are Available in Your Classrooms

Older adults can be used in both special and generic roles, as follows:

- General support of activities in the room, as indicated by observation and by the supervisor;
- "Zone" assignments: remain in a particular area to guide and supervise all children who come into the area;
- "Group" assignment: focus on a given group of children;
- "Individual child" assignment: shadow a hard-to-manage child or one who needs special support at a particular time;
- "Resource" assignment: use of a special skill.

Older adults are individuals with unique experiences and a past. Utilize their individuality to enrich the learning environment to help children grow.

"She is a woman hungry for challenge and for intellectual involvement"

- Child care agency administrator speaking of an older adult employee.

This section of the manual deals with the crucial issue of providing appropriate training and educational opportunities to older adults in a way that enables them to deliver quality care. It also focuses on helping older adults feel competent and respected, and on becoming fully integrated into their work settings. We acknowledge that the diversity of child care systems across the country (ie., their size, location, access to trainers and training institutions) will effect the quality, quantity, and availability of training. Therefore, though the comprehensive training options in this section may be more appropriate for large centers, we recommend that even small, remote centers train older workers to become competent colleagues (see Appendix H).

After reviewing this section, you will:

- Be sensitive to special training issues pertaining to older adults, including awareness of the perspectives they may bring into the setting based on their own life experience raising children;
- Recognize the importance of training, education, and orientation;
- Know the difference between training and education, and the relationship of both to providing quality care with developmental outcomes;
- Be able to use a standard curriculum planning model to design effective training;
- Select teaching strategies that relate to all learners' developmental stages and learning styles, with a special sensitivity to older adults;
- Design effective orientation;
- Identify educational opportunities in child care that appropriate older adults can utilize.

As more and more legislation, programs, consumers, and staff demand it, training and education is emerging as the significant child care issue for the 1990s. For example, the widely publicized results of the National Child Care Staffing Study (Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips, 1989), showing that children's developmental gains are related to caregivers' child development knowledge and skills in working with children, has changed attitudes towards child care training and education. More people recognize that common sense, having once been a child oneself, having raised children, or simply loving children, are helpful but insufficient preparation for informed, professional child care work. However, this recognition is by no means universal; there are still persons from the direct care to the policy

level who believe that child care is simply baby sitting and that workers need no special training.

Since the objectives of the "Productive Employment of Older Adults in Child Care" project embrace the provision of quality care of all children, a fundamental issue becomes the proper preparation of staff, no matter what their age or how many children they have reared. Being responsible for the total care and guidance of one's own children within one's own family is insufficient preparation for providing appropriate care to other people's children in a professional setting.

Critical to care of all children in a professional setting is the ability to appreciate, understand, and be sensitive to children from diverse families with diverse values. In centers where child rearing values are similar to those of the worker, calling upon personal "successful" child rearing practices may be useful. However, more often, the older worker's challenge and responsibility will be to learn about, understand, and treat fairly and compassionately many children from diverse and unfamiliar backgrounds. Moreover, whether children come from basically supportive families, or from those in which overwhelming problems detract from meeting the children's needs, all children in out-of-home care must receive the same professional child care.

Professional child care focuses on meeting children's needs and promoting their learning. Non-familial adults assuming responsibility for the care of children must ensure that their overall approaches are developmentally appropriate, and that they show acceptance, support the child in his developmental strivings, and promote positive self esteem. This is quality care. To be able to provide it requires appropriate knowledge, skills, and attributes that can be developed by formalized training and education. In other words, professional child care is informed. Caregivers know children's needs and how to meet them.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

You may expect to find an array of differences among older adults who show interest in child care work. Some may think — to varying degrees — that their common sense and experience are sufficient, and be less open to the idea of formal learning. Others may be actively interested in learning new skills and possibly acquiring a credential that will lead to greater responsibility and career mobility. You are challenged to identify each older adult's position vis-a-vis new learning and his or her interest in both formal and informal opportunities, and to motivate all to undertake a professional approach to child care. As a first step, it is useful to be aware of some of the perspectives that older adults might bring:

- A feeling that having been a child or parent is sufficient preparation for employment as a caregiver, or that instinct or common sense or "the way I treated my children" is sufficient;
- Opinions on discipline that differ from those of other older adults and younger staff. For example, some older adults may view children's behavior as "good" or "bad" rather than as a function of developmental and individual factors;
- Skepticism about why child care is needed and why parents would place their children in care, because in their day good mothers remained at home to care for their young children;
- Openness, excitement, and curiosity about a new job, coupled with an eagerness to learn;
- Resistance to any formal learning system.

This array of perspectives offers a positive challenge to the administrator in designing orientation and training. The varying viewpoints that older adults bring can encourage all to examine the premises for their views and practices, and can be a springboard for implementing training and education that moves towards positive and developmentally appropriate views and practices.

STELLA, AN OLDER ADULT COMPLETING CHILD CARE TRAINING

Older adults who have completed high-quality, pre-service training programs regularly praise the effectiveness of such training in preparing them for work in child care. Learning new ways to approach caring for groups of children is an oft-cited benefit.

Stella is one such older child care worker. A former waitress in a Western Pennsylvania mill town, Stella turned to child care in her late 50s as the cafes where she had worked closed, victims of the shrinking steel mill work force. She spoke shortly after she completed a 120-hour Generations Together training program, funded by the Job Partnership Training Act, that prepared her to work in a near-by Head Start Center (see Appendix H for summary of training). Asked about the training, she spoke with infectious enthusiasm:

"I learned a lot!

"I was raised in the family with two immigrants. I knew my people loved me, but their definition of love was a roof over your head, food on the table, and clothes on your back, and a bed to sleep in. They were brought up that way, that was love. In my generation, we spent a little more time with our children, we read to them. But now, after our training, I see how valuable it is to explain things to children, instead of yelling at them all the time. They react to explanation!

"These past weeks I learned that if you explain to children why they can't do something, they look at you and they think about it, and react to the reason why they shouldn't do that. From the training we learn that these children do hurt, that these children do understand, that they do have a mind, that they do have feelings . . . we do understand."

The following guidelines may help you conduct successful training and education:

Utilize Older Adults' Earlier Experience as a Training Tool

Carefully assessing not only older adults' training needs (i.e., perspectives at variance with developmentally appropriate practice), but also their strengths and special abilities, may open them to learning in areas of greater sensitivity and less familiarity.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Recognize the Distinction Between Training and Education

Training is short-term, job specific, and skill-oriented (What does the worker need to know to work in this program?). Education is long term, generic (being more likely to be transferable from setting to setting), career oriented, and focused on theoretical knowledge, thinking, and problem-solving skills, as well as on practical applications.

Distinguish Between Pre-Service Training, Orientation, and In-Service Training

Pre-service training can be competency-based, preparing older workers for a variety of tasks generic to work in child care. Like their younger counterparts, older workers may have completed systematic preparation for child care with JTPA or community college training programs. In-service training consists of on-going, job-specific workshops to enhance specific skills. These experiences should, wherever possible, include both older and younger workers as co-learners.

Recognize That Training and Education Have Numerous Forms and Delivery Methods

These range from the informal to highly standardized sequences of courses and formal curricula delivered by academic institutions and leading to degrees and credentials. The following training/education continuum shows this range:

- An agency orientation;
- Informal discussions before the children come for the day;
- Periodic lectures, special guests, conferences, and other professional development workshops;
- Scheduled, agency-sponsored in-service sessions;
- Seminars and informal courses offered in the community;
- Formal training courses for possible credit or certification offered by universities, community colleges, or training consultants;
- Formal degree programs, with prerequisites and required content course sequences (usually including both classroom and supervised field work at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate level).

Plan Successful Training and Education Experiences

Depending on your program's size and mission, and your state regulatory guidelines, you may have a staff development program at your agency that includes an established program of in-service training and/or provides specialized training. Whatever model you use, and in anticipation of including older adults as trainees, a carefully planned and defined program will increase the success of any such activity.

Train Persons Other than the Older Adults to Actively Bring Older Adults into Child Care Centers

All staff need to learn more about older adults as colleagues; to explore their attitudes towards them in a supportive, informative situation; and to consider practical ways of involving older adults on the child care team.

The continuum of training and education suggests that training is more likely (although not always) to be designed and delivered by individual agencies, while educational programs are designed by the offering institution. Thus, it is important to consider issues in designing training so that it is most effective. The design of training has one absolute function: **To ensure transferability from the training situation into trainee-changed behavior in the practice setting.** If training "doesn't take," then it has been a needless expenditure of time. Try the following to promote training that transfers:

Use a standard curriculum planning model to ensure that the training content and delivery is based on a systematic analysis of the needs of the children, the agency, and the trainees. Follow a typical model used in business, education, or other fields to design training. Specifically, be sure that the training addresses the following questions:

- What do the program, and the trainees, feel they need to know and do; what do they already know? (NEEDS ASSESSMENT)
- What is the purpose and the expected outcomes of the training? (GOALS AND OBJECTIVES)
- What content needs to be included and how should it be sequenced? (PROGRAM)
- What teaching/instructional strategies should be used to most effectively deliver the training? (TEACHING METHODS)

TRAINING

DESIGNING TRAINING

-
- How will you determine the degree to which your training has been successful? (EVALUATION)
 - How will you use this information to improve your training? (FEEDBACK)

The following are points to consider for each of these areas:

Needs Assessment

Gathering specific needs data, both through written surveys and through individual and group interviewing, is particularly useful when training older adults.

- Recognize older adults' need to feel competent and to adequately fulfill their work responsibilities;
- Check state guidelines and Child Development Associates (CDA) competencies for training requirements and include them as data in your needs assessment;
- Ask older adults what they think they would like to, or need to, know, in order to best do their job;
- Find out what experience and skills older adults have relevant to child care; what experience they have had with young children and families; what formal education, both general and in child care, they have had; and what additional life experience they have had that is relevant to work in child care.

Goals and Objectives

The needs assessment enables the development of goals and objectives for the training, using an individual content-specific workshop or an organized model, i.e., "to improve overall quality of service," "to create enabling physical environments," "to utilize developmentally appropriate discipline," or "to work positively with parents."

Objectives are directly derived from the goal statements and should reflect specific, observable behaviors to be demonstrated by trainees as a result of the training, i.e., "To arrange furniture into activity centers;" "to use the environment to promote positive behavior," or "to demonstrate three constructive ways of communicating with parents."

Program

The program is the actual content included in the training. The following suggestions are useful in selecting content:

- The objectives should be used to determine the content;
- Content should include professional skills, i.e., how to work with younger counterparts, being a team member, appropriate communication with parents;
- Content should be both agency-related and applicable in any setting;
- Content should include thinking and problem-solving skills;
- Theoretical or factual content should be reinforced with examples and actual application to practice under instructor guidance;
- There should be sufficient time for review, discussion, questions, and practice;
- The CDA (Child Development Associate) functional areas provide a useful source of acceptable content (see CDA Competency and Functional Areas for Preschool Caregivers in Center-based Programs in Appendix C);
- The content has to be prepared in a realistic time sequence, both long-term (over days, weeks, and months) and short-term (how any day's training will be ordered):
 - | Make sure there is enough time to present, discuss, practice, and question any particular content;
 - | Most experienced trainers find that no more than one objective can be covered effectively each hour;
 - | In most instances, four hours or less is the best timing for a single training experience; appropriately timed breaks should be given;
 - | Training methodologies should be varied over a time sequence, i.e., lecture, small and large group discussion, demonstrations, hands-on experiences, questions and answers, and simulations.
- Content, presented over an extended time period, should include the following areas, appropriately sequenced:

Child Development

- Concept of developmentally appropriate practice;
- Developmentally appropriate discipline and behavior management;
- Play facilitation methods;
- Child development in a life span context;
- Positive communication.

Curriculum

- Suitable curriculum or program for age groups served;
- Significance of play in curriculum;
- Play facilitation methods;
- Special skill and curricular areas, i.e., story telling, creative dramatics, woodwork, computers;
- Cultural diversity.

Classroom Management

- Environmental design and room arrangement;
- Observation and recording methods;
- Health and safety issues;
- Communication with parents and families;
- Concept of intergenerational team work; staff relationship skills.

ADULT LEARNING

In preparing to teach all learners, and especially older adult learners, it is important to consider strategies that will enhance their learning experience and will promote the retention and effective transfer of learning. Being aware of the following adult learner characteristics' and using appropriately related teaching methods will result in an enjoyable and effective learning experience for the student.

Characteristics of Older Adult Learners

- Older adults bring a lifetime of background, skills, and experience to the learning situation. They often define themselves in terms of their experiences, and can use their diverse backgrounds as a resource to each other in the learning environment;
- Older adults are generally self-directed in their learning. They often feel conflict within themselves when they find other people making decisions for them;
- Older adults approach educational activities with a life-centered, problem-centered, or task-centered orientation. They **expect** their new skills and knowledge to apply directly to a specific life situation;
- Older adults are motivated to learn by intrinsic factors such as the need for:
 - | Greater self-esteem;
 - | Feelings of self-confidence;
 - | Creative expression;
 - | An improvement in the quality of their lives.

-
- Older adult learners tend to focus on social and occupational role competence. They need opportunities to identify the competency requirements of their new occupational role;
 - Older adult learners need to integrate new ideas into the body of knowledge they already possess. However, the integration of this information takes more time if there is a little overlap with previous knowledge;
 - Older adult learners tend to compensate for being slower in some sensory and psychomotor learning tasks by being more accurate and making fewer trial-and-error ventures;
 - Older learners may need training in learning strategies they never developed or have forgotten (for example, categorizing, outlining, repeating the names of things to remember);
 - Older adults learn best in informal groups where they can utilize each other's resources;
 - Adult learners respond to a structured learning environment that enables them to measure their progress with respect to their expectations;
 - Adult learners bring values, beliefs, and ideas to the learning environment that may conflict with some contemporary views. It is important to recognize a variety of values as valid and appropriate for discussion.

Teaching Methods

To be sensitive to these characteristics, the training strategies should include the following teaching methods:

- Encourage student participation in selected training content;
- Enable students to integrate their own life experiences into the training content;
- Provide opportunities to consider application of content to real life situations;
- Involve students in the delivery of training in their own areas of expertise;
- Use experiential activities: role play, small group activities, observations, brainstorm sessions, simulations, learning centers, demonstration, media followed by discussion, question and answer periods;
- Vary the length of time and format for each training session;
- Provide opportunities for group debriefing to assess individual and group progress;
- Utilize mentor and coaching opportunities in which more experienced persons (former students or current older workers) demonstrate/model a practice and guide the trainee to ensure transfer of training.

EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

Special Consideration for Older Adults

Include the older adults in the agency's scheduled external training activities.

If possible, subsidize older workers' external training (pay for transportation) and be sensitive to the reluctance of some to be out alone after dark.

In any training activity, evaluation and feedback are crucial. Evaluation helps to determine to what degree the training has improved practice and the outcomes for children and tell us which aspects of training contributed to these gains. Feedback tells participants how they're doing.

Use evaluation methods that enable the trainer to gather information about both process (what trainees found helpful in learning) and outcomes (what they could specifically do at the end of training). These are referred to as formative (process) and summative (outcome) evaluation strategies.

In formative evaluation, trainers examine learning issues while the training is actually being developed. What teaching strategies did the participants find most interesting and useful? What room arrangement and what length of time seemed to work best? What content did they seem to find the most important? This kind of information can be gathered both by informal observation, by reviewing training sessions as they go along, and by asking participants their opinion orally, and by simple written questionnaires.

In summative evaluation, information is gathered at the end of a formal program. Here, the degree of learning and/or amount of change in participants in areas covered by the training would be assessed. Ideally, longer-term follow up is useful in evaluation: to what extent did trainees actually change or improve their practice behavior, and what was the impact on the development of the children?

Conducting useful evaluations can be achieved by developing an evaluation plan that uses some of the following techniques: observations, self-report, interviews, and standardizing instruments. These can generate useful data the enable program planners to continually make their training activities more effective.

EDUCATION

While some older adults will be happy participating in the agency's regular in-service activities, others may be interested in following a more formalized program. Just as the concept of continuing toward an educational track certification and a degree is the emphasis for all persons in the child care field, so should the older worker be encouraged to have the training experiences that can lead to a formal education

track and a related certification or a degree. This opportunity and encouragement will reaffirm and secure the older worker's place as a colleague in the field of child care.

Educational options include degree programs at community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities. Some colleges and universities offer special extension programs in child development and child care work through departments of continuing education, or through standard academic or professional departments such as early childhood education, social work, developmental psychology, child care, human services, human development, and family studies.

The following suggestions may encourage older adults' utilization of educational options:

- Research accessible educational options and make this information available to your workers in a way that it may gain older workers attention. (Many people are not aware of the growing opportunities for formal education in child care work, feeling that it is an occupation that anyone with warm feelings can do);
- Develop a personal professional development plan (as part of supervision) with each employee. The supervisor should review with the older worker whether further formal education is appropriate in terms of their experience, interest, abilities, and energy;
- Serve as a field placement or training site for area academic programs in the field, with a possible special focus on intergenerational programs as a learning experience. This develops a working relationship and exchange with the academic program;
- Implement an agency-sponsored program of further education (funds may have to be sought for this) in which the agency gives time off and even some financial subsidy for workers gaining formal education in return for a time commitment of work to the agency following its completion. Acknowledge their completion with an increase in salary;
- Support employee initiative in securing further education, i.e., provide release time and opportunity to do assignments requiring the work setting as a context, encourage promotions, and higher salaries and greater responsibilities in line with educational advancement.

Older adults' productivity and enjoyment in the work place is enhanced by appropriate training and education.

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

The procedures for insuring productive employment of older adults in child care include several considerations once the older adults have been hired and given their initial assignments. Careful attention should be paid to providing supportive working conditions that will result in productive workers who benefit the child care sites and who themselves benefit from the work experience. This section presents specific suggestions for providing working conditions that support older adults' productivity, morale, and safety.

After reviewing this section, you will:

- Recognize the necessity of adequately compensating older adult employees;
- Be able to apply strategies for preparing other staff for integration of older workers;
- Be able to design and implement supervisory methods and models that support older adults;
- Be aware of ongoing working conditions that maximize older worker productivity.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

One of the most important ways to confirm value on workers in today's society is with appropriate financial compensation. As one seasoned administrator puts it, "Salary scales for all staff should be equitable for position and hours worked. . . ." All workers, including older workers, will be more highly motivated when compensation is maximized. The following suggestions should aid in providing older adult workers with adequate pay and benefits:

- Every center should have a written compensation policy. This could be a board directive, a union contract, a staff agreement, or any document spelling out the center's policies. Policies should include a system of levels of entry and requirements for promotion. In-service training and accrued years of experience should count towards raising the worker to a higher level;
- Older workers should receive the same benefits as other staff, such as health coverage, vacation, personal leave, and sick leave. It is highly discriminatory to deny them to older workers where other staff receive them. Specific benefit packages are dependent upon the budget capabilities of individual child care programs;
- Salaries should be based on education and experience, just as they might be for younger workers;
- Contact private and public funding sources, i.e., local foundations or the Title V agency-funded Older Americans Act, to assist you in providing funding for older adults' salaries until agency staff line funds are available.

An important component in developing a quality intergenerational child care center is the supportive competencies of the older and younger staff members and their ability to work effectively together. The attitudes and values of your younger staff toward the children, the center, and the new older adult co-workers contribute to this quality.

Center supervisors and administrators are responsible for supervising current staff and preparing them to work with older adults, as well as supervising older workers and helping them integrate into the center. Attitudes, perceptions, and behavior of all staff toward each other affect the working conditions of all the employees. Therefore, to help promote positive cross-age attitudes, staff:

- Should meet with an experienced professional who works with older adults such as a senior center director, Area Agency on Aging director, or elder affairs counselor;
- Need an opportunity to discuss preconceptions about older adult workers. A quiz, such as Palmore's "Attitudes Towards Aging," might be a good springboard for discussion and review;
- Need to discuss previous experiences with older adults within and outside their families;
- Need an adequate informational data base about older adults, i.e., realistic information about the importance of their past experience, how they learn, their health needs, and safety issues, etc.;
- Need to discuss expectations of, and concerns about, older adult workers;
- Need to discuss the older worker's anticipated skills in the context of the children's needs;
- Need to be able to raise questions in a supportive atmosphere;
- Might be provided role play opportunities that anticipate and deal with working with and supervising older adults, both to increase understanding and to develop skills.

PREPARING EXISTING STAFF FOR OLDER ADULT WORKERS

SUPERVISION

"Our aides view supervision as an integral part of their working experience." - Agency supervisor

Supervision is extremely important for older adults, not only in promoting their positive performance on the job, but also in confirming their significance to the center's work. Supervision has several functions: skill-oriented, to help the employee develop and maintain the skills necessary to do the job; valiative, to determine how well the employee actually is performing on the job; and developmental, to help the employee plan for his/her ongoing professional growth. Similarly, there are several ways in which supervision can be delivered: group, individual, peer, formal, and on-the-spot.

"Marina, as an older worker, needs more from her employment than a paycheck. She needs someone who helps her feel competent."

- Agency administrator

The following suggestions are derived from the experience of child care supervisors working with older adults:

- Supervision needs to be more personalized for older adults, recognizing their sense of personhood, as well as dealing with any situations that may concern them. During the first six months of placement, supervisors should meet alternate weeks with the older workers to review their work, what they have learned, and how they feel about their work in child care. Supervisors should use these meetings to support older workers by suggesting techniques for improving skills, addressing problems and their solutions, and by encouraging older workers to suggest ideas that can be integrated into the center;
- Group supervision may take the form of a meeting with all the older workers to discuss questions and problems affecting the entire group and the center;
- While group supervision can be very useful, it is best only if teamed with the older adult worker's individual supervision; its importance is emphasized by the following comment from an experienced supervisor:

"A private conference time with our senior aides is scheduled to discuss any personal problems the aides may encounter with children, parents, or staff."

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- Supervision needs to respect the special experiences that older adults bring to the setting. One supervisor says: "An important thing to remember in the supervisory relationship is that older adults bring a great deal of life experience to any job and that this experience must be validated";
 - Supervisors should assume leadership in facilitating communication between older and younger workers, to ensure mutual understanding;
 - Supervision needs to ensure that the older adult does not feel watched or "supervised," slight error of practice may be better than continued scrutiny and pointed correction;
 - Supervision is a process: at first, older adults may need more specific direction; as time goes on this need decreases and the older adult will respond well to some latitude for testing and trying their own approaches;
 - Supervision can be effective without being threatening. The following pointers can enhance its effectiveness:
 - | Jointly set supervisory agenda;
 - | Discuss job expectations and standards ahead of time, and those activities that will help employees meet them;
 - | Focus on developmental aspects of supervision as well as on evaluation and skill building;
 - | Use a mentor model for older adults as part of the supervision, in which another older worker who has been with the program longer serves as a special resource to the newer employee.
 - Observations can be shared in both practical and theoretical ways by perspective sharing and discussion, rather than by criticism or over-direction;
 - Supervisors need to recognize that different approaches, especially those coming from persons of varying ages and cultures, may actually be an asset and a replication of life in which children must adapt to different styles.

SUPERVISING AN OLDER CHILD CARE WORKER IN HER NEW COUNTRY

Olga is a sixty-year old Polish immigrant woman who is currently employed as an assistant teacher in our day care center. She has completed an English language course and an employment training course in day care. She has also earned a day care certificate. In Poland, Olga taught history at the university level. She has written articles for journals and has collaborated on several books.

Olga is very self-conscious about not speaking spontaneously in English. This impediment is very serious to her: Self articulation was very important in her previous work. She is hoping that meeting the very immediate needs of young children will help her language skills.

When we first met at the interview, I was struck by both her intelligence and her extreme self-consciousness about her language limitations. At that time, it occurred to me that as a supervisor, I must find a way to put her at their ease so that she would not be so frustrated at not being able to articulate her ideas freely. She needed the reassurance that her job would not be at stake. After several meetings, she began to relax. Her head teacher and I decided that I would supervise Olga on a regular basis.

At first, we met weekly and now we meet bi-weekly. I soon discovered that no matter how hard I tried to focus our conversations on her perceptions of the children, families, curriculum, or the general day care environment, we could never finish the conversation as planned. We began to talk about all kinds of political, social, and cultural matters, only sometimes bringing the conversation back to her work at the day care center.

Although this was new for me in a supervisory relationship, I felt, and still do feel, that Olga — as an older work — needs more from her employment than a paycheck. She has talked extensively about previous employment. I sense that she brings her grandmother persona to her classroom and her professional persona to our meetings. She is a woman hungry for challenge and for intellectual involvement. Many of our discussions center on the different cultural expectations for children in and here in the United States. We have discussions about discipline and developmental curriculum. We compare value systems, and parental views. All the time we are both learning — Olga about developmentally appropriate practice and myself about the various ways in which staff can be supervised.

It is essential that older employees be considered part of the center team; the positive effects on communication and sense of commitment when all workers are included in joint exchanges and planning efforts is well recognized.

- Older adults should be invited to team meetings. If these occur on their times off, they should be compensated for coming in to attend;
- Older adults should be informed about the function of team meetings and their role in them. The purpose of team meetings can be discussed in supervisory meetings;
- Some older adults may be shy about sharing their observations. They should be encouraged to contribute: "Mrs. Henriquez, you've spent quite a lot of time with Tamara. How do you think she's been doing this week?" Other elders may be over-talkative and opinionated; team leaders should have tactful strategies at hand for helping them behave more appropriately (This strategy is one that is used irrespective of the worker's age);
- Part of the function of team work is the evaluation of progress towards goals and recommending program changes as needed; this process is enhanced by securing overall commitment when all employees participate.

When people know what is expected as a result of their work, and their particular role in attaining established goals, effective practice is enhanced. Thus it is important that job roles for older adults, just as for other staff, be clearly stated and understood by all. An experienced administrator offers the following suggestions:

- The job description should include the following:
 - | Broad program goals;
 - | Required qualifications;
 - | Attitudinal pre-requisites (general);
 - | Specific duties to be performed regularly;
 - | Other professional expectations, e.g., training, meetings;
 - | Time schedules;
 - | Pay scale.
- Job descriptions that are too specific may be interpreted narrowly and can limit older adults' creativity and imagination. For example, "older adults will:
 - | Read to small groups of children in the morning;
 - | Greet children and their parents when they arrive in the morning;
 - | Dress children for outdoor activities."

TEAM WORK

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

"We allow our staff to be creative and appreciate the diversity and uniqueness that seniors bring to the program." - Agency supervisor

- Job descriptions that are more flexible encourage older adults' creativity. For example, "older adults will:
 - | Read with individual or groups of children throughout the day as needed;
 - | Be available to interact with parents and their children on arrival and departure, as appropriate;
 - | Help children in all transition activities."
- Flex-time and part-time job options are extremely important:
 - | Providing flex-time and part-time work options recognizes older workers' possible physical limitations or commitments and permits them to utilize their energy in a more productive way;
 - | It is a good idea to have the older worker help to determine how many hours of work would be most productive;
 - | Scheduling of older adults should include peak activity time, arrival and departure, and/or transition or quiet times. Involving older adults throughout the day will more effectively integrate them into the life of the center and will help accommodate to their needs.

HEALTH

"While some older adults may have some physical limits in strength, speed, and agility and occasionally may need treatment for illness associated with aging, their hearts are always in their work, and their loyalty is to the kids and the staff. They are as faithful as the mailman."

- A Child Care Center Administrator

Health issues are as important for older adults as they are for the rest of the staff and for the children. Many older adults are energetic and robust and can participate at the same level as younger staff; others have much to contribute but require some modification of assignment in line with their physical capacities.

Health policies should be in place for all staff and should include older workers. It is important to bear in mind that all workers in a center may have physical limitations, i.e., one staff person might have a broken leg from a skiing accident, another might be recovering from surgery, and another might be nursing an ulcer. Some staff members, both old and young, may contract every cold and flu that

thrives in a child care center. In some situations, however, older workers may have some personal illness that is more specifically linked to aging, ie, degenerative arthritis.

An administrator offers the following pointers that reflect a sensitivity to the health needs of their older staff:

- Help the older adult worker gauge his/her parameters of energy. Older workers will be very familiar with their ability to bend, walk stairs, lift, etc. It is wise to make assignments accordingly, taking care to let the older worker make a personal assessment of capability;
- Older adults, as well as all other staff, should stay home when they have colds or are not feeling well. If this is center policy, it is important to remind older workers of its importance. (Often devoted older adults will feel they should come to work, well or sick);
- Flex-time and part-time employment can reduce physical stress;
- Regular break times and rest periods are mandatory.

"Four hours makes for a nice day." - Older adult worker

- Inform older workers of the state health regulations before they begin work at the center;
- Physical examinations and T.B. tests are mandatory before employment (They are usually required by state regulations);
- Flu shots reduce susceptibility to some viral illnesses; older adults should be encouraged to consult their personal physicians about these shots;
- The physical environment should be reviewed with an eye for safety for all concerned:
 - | Are areas labelled or signed to make it easy for older adults to locate what is needed?
 - | Are there comfortable adult-size chairs and rocking chairs available to the older worker?
 - | Is equipment safe and arranged safely, i.e., are chairs and tables stable?
 - | Is the space between outdoor playground equipment adequate for safe access by small children and their care givers?
 - | Is lighting adequate?

-
- | Is food in the staff refrigerator periodically checked for freshness?
(Older adults may be prone to food poisoning when reduced smell sensitivity prevents them from recognizing spoiled food.)
 - | Is there immediate back-up for an older staff member in dealing with a physically acting out child?
 - | Is there a comfortable lounge area for the staff to relax and visit with each other?

A supportive work environment will ensure the presence and ongoing commitment of older workers.

One of the best ways of securing professional quality child care is through formal career development programs which plan and facilitate employees' ongoing professional growth.

After reviewing this section, you will:

- Be familiar with the concept of career ladder development in child care and established career progression models;
- Know the components of direct and indirect career paths;
- Apply strategies for engaging staff in activities to advance their careers;
- Be able to design appropriate recognition programs.

The notion of career ladders is particularly pertinent to ensuring a well-prepared, continuous labor force in child care. Establishing such career ladders is now a special emphasis of the National Association for the Education of Young Children through its National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development. In some child care settings, formalized career development plans or "ladders" are in place so that staff can be upwardly mobile. In others, staff may be frozen at whatever level they entered the program. This may contribute to frequent turnover as staff grows and, feeling stuck, decides to leave for better opportunity elsewhere.

An established career ladder reflects an articulated sequence of increasingly challenging and complex jobs, showing job holders at any level what options might be available for further advancement should they develop the prerequisite skills and qualifications. These qualifications are usually developed through a combination of on-job experience and further training and education.

Some child care centers already have career ladder programs; if so, the older adults should be given the opportunity to participate in them.

Child care career ladders exist — or can and should be developed — for both direct and indirect positions. Direct work, as the name implies, are those positions in which the practitioner interacts directly with children. Indirect work is that in which the practitioner works with or through other adults to serve to children, i.e. administrative, managerial, supervisory, and support functions. There is also the "blended" career path combining both direct and indirect work; this is more likely to occur in smaller programs where, for example, a director may also work directly in the child care center.

In designing career ladders, several concepts might be considered. The first of these is the notion of progression — positions increase in complexity, requisite knowledge and skill, responsibility, and opportunity for independent decision making.

CAREER LADDER DEVELOPMENT

DIRECT CAREER PATH PROGRESSION

Aide: An entry level position for a person with minimal formal preparation and experience who plays a supportive role in the classroom or unit under the direction of another staff member, i.e., preparing materials, working directly with small groups, or providing special attention to enable an individual child to better participate in group activity.

Assistant: A practitioner with some experience and formal training, who, while working directly under supervision of a lead person, makes more autonomous decisions regarding the program and handling of the children according to developmentally appropriate practice and take an active role in planning.

Lead or Head Teacher: A practitioner with sufficient experience and formal training who can work without direct supervision to plan program, supervise other workers, make decisions, and demonstrate ways of supporting the children.

Mentor Teacher: A seasoned direct practitioner who models practice for novices and works closely with them to upgrade their knowledge and skills.

Developmental Specialist: An experienced professional practitioner, teacher, and educator who has diverse educational background experiences working with children and who can make a special contribution to the work of a center, by doing special observations, working individually with children in need of special support, working with staff, and working with other agencies. An older adult who has worked in a child development, child care, or educational career for a major portion of his/her adult life might be a successful applicant for a post-retirement position in a child care center. Such a person might very well be appropriately utilized as a developmental specialist.

INDIRECT CAREER PATH OPTIONS

Similarly, there can be an indirect career path with steps in progression. It is important with older adult employees — as well as with all staff — that child care be seen as embracing the indirect as well as direct roles. Indirect roles, as mentioned, are those that support the work of the center or agency but do not entail primarily direct interaction with children. There are numerous options within this category and it is extremely important to consider them when planning for, and with, each older adult. These may include maintenance worker, food preparation worker, public relations and marketing specialist, accountant/bookkeeper, development officer (fund raising), secretary, administrative assistant, bus and van driver, trainer, newsletter editor, and writer. Indirect positions serve several important functions for the older adult.

Interested older adults who may not have the appropriate direct interaction skills to work with young children may do very well and can make a significant

contribution in supportive activities (although these in themselves do not constitute a formal career path): preparing special materials, preparing food, running office machines, and doing marketing and public relations, etc. If possible, such skills should be integrated into consideration of a more formal position and the older adult encouraged to apply what s/he has and to develop other skills that might be needed.

Older adults with special skills, i.e., former accountants, gardeners, custodians, carpenters, office workers (to name just a few), can contribute with the work of the center. If such persons also have good relational skills with children, they can be excellent role models for the children and add enrichment to the program. As the early childhood profession expands, it is essential to provide both vertical and horizontal movement opportunities for all positions whether they involve direct or indirect service to children.

Given the notions of direct and indirect career ladders, and progression in each, then it is ideal to consider a more formally recognized career sequence with increasing levels of professional responsibility. This, of course, is particularly appropriate for those settings that serve children of early childhood age. A possible sequence is:

- Early Childhood Teacher Assistant—this person works under supervision to implement the program;
- Early Childhood Associate Teacher—this person can work more independently; may be responsible for a group of children;
- Early Childhood Teacher— a professional who is responsible for work with a group of children;
- Early Childhood Specialist— this is an indirect position and subsumes such functions as supervision, administration, staff training, and curriculum design.

Each of these positions is associated with a level of educational preparation ranging from high school through a master's degree. An early childhood associate teacher would hold the CDA credential or an associate degree in early childhood education or child development.

Administrators in other settings, e.g., after school programs, residential and community programs, programs serving older exceptional children, in addition to utilizing the material cited above, might review career development models from other fields involving older adults as part of their professional team.

ESTABLISHED CAREER LADDER SEQUENCES

PATHWAYS TOWARDS CAREER LADDERS

It is important for older adults, as for any staff, that you prepare and encourage them to pursue career ladder options. Some ways to do this with older adults include:

- Reviewing older adults' experience or skills and provide an opportunity to specialize on the job. In direct care roles, especially, this can bring to the children highly enriching activities such as multicultural experiences, art, music, science, and numerous others. Some strategies for identifying and developing specialty areas include:
 - | Asking older adults about their past experiences and current interests to determine how they might relate to your program;
 - | Encouraging older adults to use appropriate activities and interests with the children, and providing guidance to help older adults adapt successfully and conduct activities utilizing these talents or interests.

"...I would like to incorporate and utilize this older adult in our storytelling period. I also would also like to see his/her abilities enhance our children's development by speaking of their life experiences when they were children, and how things were different then." - Agency director

- | Observing the adult in spontaneous activity; this may give cues as to special areas of strength that neither your nor the older worker may previously have recognized. This includes indirect skills that might lead into a formal indirect career path;
 - | Considering each adult's potential for filling an open job position.
- Implementing policies and procedures that clearly define what it takes to progress within a position or to move to another position. Following are some strategies for enabling older adults to advance in their careers:
 - | Monitor progress – keep progress reports and evaluations of each individual's work;
 - | Provide guidance and supervision – supervisors need to be alert for evidence of growth potential in workers they supervise, to point out such evidence, and to suggest further activities to enhance professional development;
 - | Establish mentoring programs – assign each older adult to a specific mentor for career planning and development. Similarly, a seasoned older adult may serve as a mentor to a newer person;

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- | Establish formal personal professional development agreements – some agencies work out with each employee an individual plan for professional development which matches the worker's abilities, interests, aspirations, and external opportunities for training and for moving into new positions;
 - | Provide training scholarships – funding to subsidize further training for older adults can be made available as resources permit. Identify scholarships as a priority for fund-raising;
 - | Inform staff of opportunities for advancement by:
 - Posting job openings on the center bulletin board on a spot reserved for personnel matters;
 - Routing announcements of external training and seminars;
 - Sharing journals and other professional material with older adult employees, who can then be offered the opportunity to discuss its relevance to them with their supervisors;
 - Establishing an employee library with current journals, newspapers, and announcements.

"When an older worker is encouraged to participate in further training with compensation, the older worker feels greater commitment to work and greater interest in professional advancement." - Agency administrator

RECOGNITION

Professional development occurs when all staff, including older adults, feel respected for their accomplishments. It is crucial that older adults, like all workers, be formally recognized for their contributions. This secures loyalty and commitment. Some suggestions for such recognition include:

- Awards and recognition dinners, with certificates for periods of service or special contributions;
- Biographical sketches of older adults in agency newsletters;
- Invitation to joint participation in an external agency activity, i.e., delivering a workshop in the community;
- Timely review for promotions and pay raises;
- "Employee-of-the-month" programs;
- Personal recognition, i.e., birthdays (check to see if employee would like this), family events.

The career ladder opportunities for older adults in child care settings are endless if you allow yourself the freedom to creatively utilize the experience, the life skills, the maturity, and the special talents older adults have spent many years acquiring and perfecting.

ADVOCATING FOR CHILD CARE & PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER ADULTS

VII

Ultimate success in recognizing child care as a crucial professional service, and the role of older adults in delivering it, depends upon the degree to which those involved on the front lines address child care's problems and concerns by influencing legislation and disseminating knowledge.

After reviewing this section, you will:

- Know the significance of economic and legislative issues in child care and practitioners' roles in addressing them;
- Apply strategies for coalition and network building;
- Be able to develop a dissemination and publication plan for informing others about child care programs.

Economic and legislative issues go hand in hand, for often only legislation at the local, state, or national levels can provide the funds for out-of-home care for low-to-mid-income workers with preschool-age children. Points to convey to legislators include:

- Allocating sufficient funds to prevent frequent staff turnover in child care centers is essential;
- Adequately compensating and supporting both younger and older workers can be a highly effective way of providing quality and continuous care for children;
- Standards for initial employment of older workers should consider their previous experience in life, specifically in raising children, and offer flex-time and part-time opportunities;
- Allocating training funds for older workers will ensure an opportunity for developing additional skills to meet the appropriate practices in quality child care.

Effectiveness with legislative bodies comes from larger constituencies that can make their unified voices heard. Thus it is important that child care center staff join with others to build effective coalitions and networks. This requires special efforts, so that groups present a united front even though their individual members have a range of opinions on various issues.

A network, as a more loosely structured connection among programs with different perspectives and agenda, can create non-threatening exchange in which adversaries can come to appreciate the other's viewpoint, and reduce the fear that joining a more formal coalition may jeopardize jobs or business relationships.

ECONOMIC AND LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING COALITIONS AND NETWORKS

Meetings between child care directors and community leaders to promote the exchange of anecdotes and information of mutual interest to share with legislators can be a starting point for developing a network. Network position statements can describe positive outcomes of effective child care centers with stable, consistent staff on children and their families.

The following organizing themes (Lombardi, April, 1989) can be covered with legislators and allow for varied inputs from constituents:

- The nature of child care work: the training, skills, and experience needed;
- Where child care dollars go, showing budget details, funding sources, and "labor intensive" aspects of child care;
- Facts on salaries or hourly wages, in light of the experience and training of staff;
- Recruitment and retention, providing figures on responses to ads and recruitment efforts, turnover, and reasons given for leaving;
- Effects on children and families of too frequent turnover.

Some further tips are:

- Use real examples to highlight points made;
- Give future demographics on the need for child care and availability of workers;
- Suggest possible solutions to actual problems presented;
- Follow up initial contacts and present new information as it is developed;
- Make the case for "quality child care" in context of needs of children and their families.

DEVELOPING A DISSEMINATION AND PUBLICATION PLAN

Most child care centers do not view themselves as generating knowledge that may be useful to others. Yet, activities in many centers — and certainly those pioneering in the use of older adults — may be worthy of developing and sharing with others. Following are some suggestions for developing a dissemination and publication plan:

- The administration should initiate the dissemination and publication process; convey its value, engage staff interest, and support specific efforts;
- Workers with an interest in writing, journalism, marketing, and similar areas should be involved from the start. Some older adult employees may have such expertise;

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- Engage local media in helping to disseminate information that others can use and that can promote networking;
 - A center library, with up-to-date newsletters, professional journals, and flyers on display, should be developed (if it does not already exist). This helps to create a "dissemination culture," showing the relevance of the center's work to the wider professional world. The area should be made welcoming and comfortable (soft furniture, coffee pot) so that it is used frequently by all staff and parents. Clippings from mass media can be included, i.e., articles from the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Life Magazine*. Information needs to be kept up-to-date to retain interest;
 - Tools for gathering and recording information should be developed that are easily used, and are used to collect, review, and summarize the work of the center;
 - A dissemination and publication plan should be developed, showing possible forms, content, and delivery, with a time/activity line, and responsibilities specified.
 - Among the modes of dissemination are:
 - | Workshops and presentations on areas of specialty and strength, conferences, and community program;
 - | Informational pamphlets and brochures;
 - | Public service television announcements;
 - | Participation on radio and television programs, i.e., talk shows, call-in shows;
 - | Newspaper and newsletter articles and biographies;
 - | Formal articles for professional journals.

Older adults as workers in child care can become a significant force as advocates for quality care for our children.

POST SCRIPT

We are approaching the 21st century when 45% of caregivers for our young may well be over 55 years old. Providing programs that enhance the lives of our young children and their older caregivers is a challenge to all of us.

At Generations Together, we hope that this manual, produced to enable busy administrators to more easily apply the "Guidelines for Productive Employment of Older Adults," will be useful in your efforts to involve older adults as an integral part of your centers.

Just as these efforts will require a team approach, so also were the manual and guidelines a product of the support and work of a large number of people.

First of all, we must acknowledge the Florence V. Burden Foundation for recognizing the significance of proper utilization of older adults in child care and providing both financial and interpersonal support and guidance for this project. We thank, too, the various persons from both aging and child care systems who contributed their time, commitment, and expertise.

We hope that these collective efforts will enhance your own work and ask that you let us know how it is going. Keeping us informed will help guide our future activities in intergenerational programming as we build on a variety of efforts already underway.

Generations Together has worked for seven years in a direct service role training and placing older adults into child care centers in Western Pennsylvania. Through indirect train-the-trainers model, we have provided technical assistance to child care centers across the state of Pennsylvania who were interested in developing their own programs.

Additionally, we have teamed with community colleges across the country to establish older-adults-in-child-care training and placement partnerships between local colleges and child care and aging networks.

Finally, as part of these direct and indirect efforts we are ensuring that older adults achieve acceptable standards of competence and performance as child care workers by using a Generations Together designed child care training curriculum for older adults that meets the training requirement for Child Development Associates (CDA) certification.

As we continue our efforts to support the productivity of older adults in child care, we will be available to readers to encourage and support you and to provide assistance as needed as you strive to create quality programs that enhance the lives of our young children and their older caregivers.

Sally Newman, Ph.D., was the Project Coordinator for the "Productive Employment of Older Adults in Child Care" project. She collaborated in identifying and contacting the members of the task force, convening and facilitating the project meetings and site visits, and writing the guidelines and manual.

Dr. Newman is Executive Director of Generations Together, an Intergenerational Studies Program of the University of Pittsburgh, and a faculty member of the University of Pittsburgh's School of Medicine. She co-edited the first major book in the intergenerational field, *Intergenerational Programs: Imperatives, Strategies, Impacts, Trends*, and is the author of numerous articles on intergenerational programs and issues.

Over the last decade, Dr. Newman has spearheaded local, state, and national initiatives that examine, promote, and disseminate ideas and information concerned with intergenerational early childhood programs that involve interaction between older adults and young children. She is a member of the Pennsylvania Governor's Commission on Children and Families and the Pittsburgh Mayor's Commission on Families.

Karen Vander Ven, Ph.D., Professor in the School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh, was Project Co-director. Her work on the project included collaborating in its conceptualization, designing the consensus process for obtaining and analyzing the data that yielded the guidelines, and writing several sections of the manual.

In addition to her work on intergenerational issues, Dr. Vander Ven is the author of over 100 publications in early childhood development and child and youth care work, is on several journal editorial boards, and is the Editor of the *Journal Child and Youth Care Work*.

She has lectured all over the world and is the co-founder of the North American section of the International Federation of Educative (Children's) Communities (FICE). In Pittsburgh she serves as a mental health consultant to several Head Start programs and provides training sessions for early childhood practitioners.

Christopher R. Ward, Ph.D., Administrative Officer at Generations Together, served as project coordinator. In addition to collaborating in the writing and editing of the guidelines and manual, Dr. Ward managed the day-to-day logistics of the project.

Trained as an educational anthropologist, Dr. Ward is an adjunct faculty member in Administrative and Policy Studies in the University of Pittsburgh's School of Education. He is currently managing two multi-year research projects that examine older adult child care workers' job retention and work place experiences.

At Generations Together, he has evaluated older adult child care training projects. His publications include a recent article in *Catalyst* "Community College Training for Older Adults for Child Care Employment."

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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of Older Adults in Child Care
- B. Project Field Test Site Descriptions
- C. Child Development Associates Functional Areas
- D. References
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- F. Resources
- G. Examples from Field Test Sites
- H. Generations Together's Training

GUIDELINES

for

THE PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT OF OLDER ADULTS IN CHILD CARE

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GENERATIONS TOGETHER: An Intergenerational Studies Program

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WANTED: CHILD-CARE WORKERS, AGE 55 AND UP

Front page, *New York Times*
December 15, 1987

"Guidelines for the Productive Employment of Older Adults in Child Care" respond to the growing need to expand the pool of competent persons caring for our country's children.

Evidence of the need for an increase in both the quantity and quality of child care services is compelling. For example, 60% of American families with children under age six report mothers in the workforce (Children's Defense Fund, 1990). Yet, many children are cared for by poorly prepared caregivers in developmentally inappropriate surroundings. Furthermore, a child care staffing crisis is developing because the number of persons 18-24, traditionally the primary labor pool for child care workers, is declining. This population decreased by approximately 5 million between 1980 and 1990.

Research has shown that good quality child care depends on well-oriented, trained, and supervised staff members, no matter what their age — working under supportive and rewarding conditions that include adequate pay and benefits (Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips, 1989). Too often, however, child care agencies have emphasized finding sufficient "bodies" to fill job slots, rather than ensuring that their entire staff is appropriate, prepared, and skilled to do this specialized work, and that it is a balanced composition of people with different attributes.

There is growing evidence that child care providers can look to older adults as an increasingly viable source of potential staff members. For example, the 1980 census found that persons over age 55 accounted for 13% of all child care workers (Collins, 1987). Recognition of older adults' empathy, commitment, and interest in children, along with the fact that fewer young people are entering careers in child care, suggests the timeliness for older adults serving as child care workers. As the *New York Times* article states: "The hope is that retired people and those over age 55 may help meet a growing demand in a field with a chronic shortage of younger workers who are willing to work for its usually low wages."

Certainly older adult child care workers can contribute towards a solution to the staffing crisis. But to look upon them as an unpaid or poorly paid labor pool, provided with little or no preparation for the job, and confronted with insensitive working conditions, would diminish their great potential to improve the quality of care for children.

RATIONALE

Older adults are looking for meaningful work that enables them to feel productive and optimally apply their talents gleaned over years of living. But neither the quality of child care, nor the well being of older adults, will improve if older adults are simply hired without careful attention to recruitment, placement, training, supervision, and overall working conditions.

When their life issues, unique assets, and developmental characteristics are taken into consideration, older adults can make a significant contribution to child care, to children, to other staff members, and to parents. Children benefit by contact with older adults who can share the wisdom obtained from a lifetime of learning and experience, who can model successful aging, and who can form nurturing intergenerational relationships. Similarly, older adults can benefit physically, economically, emotionally, and cognitively from productive, meaningful work. Properly designed and structured child care work can increase older adults' self-esteem, energy level, competence, and overall sense of community participation.

THE PROJECT

Ensuring that older adults are provided such opportunities in child care is the function of the project "Guidelines for the Productive Employment of Older Adults in Child Care." Generations Together has, with funding from the Florence V. Burden Foundation, collaborated with aging and child care professionals, as well as specialists in labor, employment, and other relevant areas, to produce these guidelines which can help child care programs make optimal use of older adults to provide quality child care. In so doing, the guidelines respect the older adults' interests in productive work, appropriate preparation, suitable working conditions, and proper compensation.

The guidelines are applicable in a wide variety of programs, both full- and part-time, that serve children today: infant and family day care, center-based care, preschool, Head Start, after school care, residential care, and programs for special needs and at-risk children.

The guidelines define older adults as persons 55 years or older or, in some cases where federal funding may be involved, as persons 60 or older.

Using a consensus building process, a working task force of experts from child care, child and adult development, gerontology, training, and employment policy developed and refined the guidelines. In addition, four child care centers in West Newton, MA; Syracuse, NY; Lancaster PA; and Washington, DC field tested the guidelines for one year.

The guidelines are organized in five categories, each containing specific recommendations: **Developmental Issues, Pre-employment Activities, Training and Education, Working Conditions, and Career Advancement.**

The project staff, working with the task force and field test sites, have also developed a practitioners' manual that details strategies and resources that help to implement the guidelines.

How were the guidelines developed?

The project staff:

- Identified and selected a large group of task force members and a smaller working group responsible for drafting the guidelines;
- Collected from the task force ranked lists of issues, which were then analyzed;
- Solicited preliminary concept and review papers from task force members on the most frequently mentioned issues;
- Convened a meeting of the working group in Washington, DC, to review issues and to discuss the guidelines' content;
- Prepared a first draft of the guidelines and circulated it to all task force members for their comments;
- Convened a working group meeting in Harrisburg, PA, to which were invited directors of the field test sites to plan field testing;
- Circulated a revised version of the draft guidelines to all task force members;
- Field tested the guidelines in the project sites at the Newton Community Service Center, West Newton, MA; Department of Labor Child Development Center, Washington, DC; the Lancaster County Head Start, Lancaster, PA; and the Syracuse Developmental Center Day Care Center, Syracuse, NY;
- Visited each of the four sites three times to discuss the guidelines' implementation, determine their effectiveness, and gather information for the practitioners' manual;
- Based on the field testing, prepared a revised set of guidelines for discussion at a final meeting of the working group and site directors;
- Circulated the final draft of the guidelines for endorsement by the task force.

Who can use the guidelines?

The guidelines can be used by:

- Policy makers in child care who are considering legislation for improving the quality of child care;
- Policy makers in aging who are considering legislation to expand opportunities for productive employment of older adults;
- Advocates in child care and aging concerned with improving the standards of care for young children;
- Advocates in child care and aging concerned with the quality of preparation and equity for the child care providers;
- Administrators, supervisors, directors, and other practitioners who are planning to or are already utilizing older adults as employees.

How can the guidelines be used?

- Policy makers can use the guidelines as the standards from which legislation can be created and as the basis for new legislation.
- Advocates can use the guidelines to convince policy makers that the issues addressed by these guidelines make a significant contribution to improving the quality of child care and the quality of child care providers.
- Practitioners can use the guidelines with the manual to aid them in effectively integrating older adult employees into the child care work place. The practitioners can use the guidelines at each stage of their program development as standards to guide their planning and action.

Benefits of the guidelines

The guidelines can ultimately ensure that the three major constituents — policy makers, advocates, and practitioners — work towards quality programs that exceed current minimum standards. Utilizing these guidelines will:

- Address the needs of older adults for meaningful and remunerative employment;
- Increase a sense of commitment and teamwork, and reduce staff turnover;
- Infuse new vitality into the workplace and generate new ideas for working together and with the children and families;
- Increase participants' pleasure and involvement in the programs;
- Enable the development of effective intergenerational programs that use older workers;
- Produce new knowledge about intergenerational programs.

Developmental issues pertain to the particular needs, concerns, goals, interests, and abilities relevant to a person's life stage. Sensitivity to these developmental issues will increase the likelihood that older adults will be productive and effective employees.

DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

Employers should recognize, be sensitive to, and respond appropriately to older adults' issues related to productive employment in child care and early childhood education.

- Older adults who have already reared children, as well as those who have not, should be made aware of the importance of child care as a profession requiring specialized preparation.
- Child care work should be presented to older adults as a field in which previous life experience and current interests are a major asset when combined with formal knowledge and skill development.
- Although the majority of older adults entering the child care field are healthy and active, a limited number may have sensory deprivation, e.g., hearing loss or visual impairment. These impairments need to, and can, be addressed sensitively.
- Older adults, as well as others in child care, are engaged in life-long learning.
- Older adults are capable of learning well into advanced years.
- Older adults are capable of developing new careers; many are interested in doing so.

Effective child care programs provide staffing patterns that can restore elements that are missing in children's lives.

- Employment of older adults in child care centers provides children the opportunity to experience an intergenerational element that is missing in many of today's families and to see older adults as positive role models.
- Both older men and women should be encouraged to recognize the value of nurturing children and to pursue work in child care. Some older men may need to be encouraged to see the value of their contribution as caregivers to children; some older women may need to see themselves in a variety of leadership and administrative roles.
- Diversity among staff across socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, and age should be sought because it reflects the diversity of our pluralistic society and enriches the child care environment.

GUIDELINES

PRE-EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

Preparation for employing older adults as child care workers often begins before qualified persons actually are offered and accept positions. Ensuring that a pool of older workers is available requires planned and proactive collaborative efforts.

GUIDELINES

Utilize active recruitment strategies.

- Recruitment should emphasize that child care is a professional field with various career development options.
- Recruitment approaches should be targeted to attract a balance of men and women; people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds; and individuals with various levels of education and experience.
- Recruitment efforts should stress the assets of child care work, i.e., the contribution to the community, flexible work schedules, an opportunity to make a difference to children and families, and the chance to be creative.
- Recruitment messages should show that the agency will offer adequate compensation, provide proper working conditions, and utilize older adults in significant ways.
- Child care and aging networks should collaborate on recruitment efforts.
- Registries of qualified and available older workers need to be developed.
- Older adults should be recruited for a variety of job roles such as resource persons, content specialists, and supervisors.

Pre-employment training for older adults.

- Job training might be provided through government agencies, service agencies, community schools and institutions, or higher education institutions.
- Training can serve as an initial screening device.
- Training should be sensitive to older adults' learning styles.
- Training should identify and integrate older adults' interests into the curriculum.
- Training should be conducted with younger workers participating and should introduce the concept of intergenerational teams.
- Optimal training involves hands-on practicum work, done under professional supervision.

Prepare existing staffs to work with older adults.

- Staff leadership should support efforts to integrate older adults into the work place.
- Staff of all ages and levels should receive training on adult development: stages, characteristics, and significant life issues.

- Staff at all levels — trainers, supervisors, etc. — need to recognize the commonalities that older adults share with all persons in the program as well as older adults' special attributes and needs.
- All staff should develop strategies for communicating effectively.
- All staff should recognize that different perspectives can be constructive, rather than negative, if appropriately handled.
- Staff should introduce parents to the concept of intergenerational teams of trained older and younger child care workers.

Carefully screen and systematically hire and place older adults.

- Aptitudes, interests, and related skills, along with previous experience, including formal and informal training, volunteer activities, and care giving, should be considered in selecting and placing older workers.
- Screening should assess attitudes toward children and personality attributes such as willingness to learn, to accept supervision, and to interact with the younger workers.
- Persons not selected in a screening process should be referred to other opportunities that may be more suitable for their skills, aptitudes, and interests.
- Older adults should meet eligibility requirements for health, criminal records checks, and other standards mandated by state and local regulations.
- Employers should consider older adults with previous experience in fields such as teaching, counseling, and social work for appropriate positions.
- Employers should explore carefully with the potential older adult employees their strengths relevant to child care work, as well as what meaning caregiving holds for them. This information can be utilized not only in assigning specific roles, but also in providing responsive, ongoing supervision.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Proper training of child care staff — regardless of age — is directly related to quality of service and turnover and retention rates. Having reared one's own children and having warm feelings for children, while important assets, simply are not sufficient qualifications to provide ongoing professional service to children. Hence, appropriate training and education of staff is essential.

Training refers to providing basic information and applied skills that are necessary to function effectively in a particular setting. The effectiveness of "makeshift" training, i.e., haphazard attendance at lectures or occasional workshops, is limited because such training often does not apply in actual settings, its information is not transferable, and it may not be sensitive to trainees' developmental characteristics.

Education refers to providing long-term theoretical and applied content that leads to a degree and placement in a formal professional career ladder. Child care agencies should make older adults aware of opportunities both for training and education, and provide the support they need to participate in it.

GUIDELINES

Promote training and education for older workers.

- Appropriate training and educational opportunities should be provided for older trainees based upon their developmental knowledge and skills.
- Interested and qualified older adults should be supported actively in attaining a recognized credential such as the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) or a degree from a recognized community college, college, or university.
- Where possible, in-service and other training programs should be linked to awarding of academic credits.
- Older adults bringing related educational credentials to their positions, or attaining degrees in appropriate fields (i.e., child development) subsequent to employment, should have this reflected in the level and responsibility of their job.
- Transferability of training, specific marketable skills, and credentials are as important to older adult workers as they are to younger workers.

Provide credible child care training and education for older adult workers.

- As much as possible, training should not only be competency-based, but also should encourage developmentally appropriate practice.
- Training for older workers should at minimum meet basic state guidelines.
- Training content should include knowledge and skill building in child development, developmentally appropriate practice, curriculum, activity media, classroom management, and health and safety. More specifically, it might focus on the Child Development Associates' 6 competencies and 13 functional areas.

- Content should be designed using appropriate curriculum and instructional planning models.
- Training needs to result in a certificate of competence in relationship to a job description and, when appropriate, be considered as pre-requisite for recognized credentials such as a CDA credential or degree in child care.
- Training can be individualized to meet specific agency requirements and can be a recognized formal education curriculum.
- Information on training and educational opportunities (degree programs) should be available to all staff, including older workers.
- Older adults already on staff might participate in delivering in-service training and orientation.

Provide careful and detailed orientation and continuing training for older workers once employed in a child care program.

- Orientation to a specific child care program needs to include center philosophy, policies, organization and reporting structure, working hours, holidays, and benefits; career options; health and safety procedures; client demographics; and roles and responsibilities of parents and staff.
- Orientation and in-service training should respect older learners' special characteristics and individual needs and differences.

Utilize older adult education principles in training older adults.

- Although it is appropriate to adapt training delivery to older workers' unique learning characteristics, the knowledge and skill requirements remain constant.
- Content should be relevant to the knowledge and skills of the trainees and should be presented using appropriate adult learning principles and methods for individualized instruction.
- Transportation and other arrangements should be provided when older workers are required to participate in training away from their sites.
- The learning environment should accommodate the comfort needs of older learners.
- Training should be properly sequenced and sufficiently frequent for learners to experience continuity from one session to another.
- Content and skills developed during in-service training should be reinforced directly by supervisors in relationship to practice at the work-place.

WORKING CONDITIONS

There is a close relationship in child care settings between positive working conditions, worker morale, and quality of direct service. Positive working conditions, including ongoing, supportive supervision by knowledgeable supervisors, are especially important for older adults and can make a major contribution towards enhancing productivity and reducing turnover. Favorable working conditions are compromised severely, however, if the most fundamental component—salary and wages—is not adequate.

GUIDELINES

Compensation and benefits must be equivalent for older adults and for other employees doing the same task, at the same job level.

- Employers should counter assertively the traditional public and political contention that older adults do not really want or need compensation equivalent to that of other workers.
- The composition of benefit packages should be worked out carefully with each older adult worker considering his or her individual situation within the limits of standard benefit packages offered to all employees.

Provide a multiplicity of positions in both direct and indirect service.

- Full-time, part-time, and flex-time options should be available.
- Positions should be tied to an agency career ladder.
- Older adults should be given the opportunity to work towards, or apply for, positions at levels other than the ones they hold.
- Older adults should be made aware of job openings and should know the procedures for applying for these positions.

Provide a healthy, safe, and comfortable environment for all older workers.

- Assignments to individual children and subgroups should consider the health and physical status of the children and the older adults.
- While characteristics and needs of older adults are to be taken into consideration, stereotypes about older adult physical limitations should be addressed with factual information.
- Environmental aids and arrangements that support the maximum use of older adult abilities should be provided, e.g., appropriate-sized chairs, breaks from work, building access, and a defined place for personal belongings.

Provide ongoing supervision of older adults.

- Older adults should be able to meet individually in a private space with a supervisor at a scheduled time.
- Group and peer supervision and coaching can be included in a total supervision model. Peer support groups of older adults may be especially valuable in developing effective intergenerational teams.

- "Mentoring" programs, pairing a new older adult worker with an experienced worker, may be considered as a supervisory method.
- Informal supervisory contacts should be available.
- Opportunities for career development and advancement should be a regular agenda item in supervisory contacts with older adults.
- Older adults' concerns about being supervised by younger persons and young persons' concerns about supervising older adults need to be recognized and addressed.
- Supervisors should be aware of communication skills, issues, and perspectives generated by age differences, and older workers' strengths and potentials.

Maintain clearly defined personnel policies for older adults.

- Agency personnel policies, such as job descriptions, should apply to all workers, regardless of age.
- Procedure manuals should be developed to convey personnel policies with clarity.

Participatory management principles should be implemented as much as possible.

- Older adults should be viewed as full colleagues.
- Older adults should be integral members of planning and working teams.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

As a field moving towards professionalization, child care requires that practitioners be able to develop from entry-level to more advanced work, and to be rewarded appropriately with compensation, recognition, and responsibility. Older adults, like workers of any age, need to have an opportunity to develop careers.

GUIDELINES

Provide older child care workers the opportunity to prepare for, and enter, a formal career ladder.

- This career ladder should include options for increased responsibility based on training, experience, skills, and professional growth on the job.
- The ladder should include "rungs" involving increased responsibility for both hands-on work and managerial tasks.
- There should be periodic reviews to consider increased compensation commensurate with responsibilities held.
- On-site career advancement workshops for older adults can be used to facilitate their personal career planning.
- Older adults bringing educational credentials to their positions or attaining degrees in appropriate fields (child development-related) subsequent to employment should have this reflected in the level and responsibility of their job.
- Where possible, in-service and other training programs should be linked to awarding of academic credits.

Tasks should be inherently meaningful and rewarding.

- Older adults should participate in preparation and maintenance work to the same degree that other staff in similar positions do.
- Older adults should be provided with the opportunity to discuss and receive feedback on their work.
- Opportunities for older adults to "specialize" should be sought, e.g., one-to-one interaction, story telling, art, special skill areas.
- Older adults should be encouraged to develop ongoing and consistent relationships with individual children in their care.

Employers' role in enhancing opportunities for older workers extends beyond the immediate setting.

- Agencies and employers should serve as advocates for the professionalization of child care as a field which is significantly linked to society's overall well-being and functioning.
- Employers should build coalitions with other agencies to develop advocacy activities at the state and federal levels. Such advocacy should include lobbying for better salaries, working conditions, and program support, not only for older adults, but for all who work in child care.

- Agencies should actively identify public and private organizations (i.e., corporations, individuals, foundations) that might serve as funding sources for employing and training older adults in child care.
- Child care programs employing older workers should invite legislators to observe their strengths and contributions.
- Organizations concerned with human welfare, e.g., agencies serving children and older adults, academic departments, and professional organizations, should plan and implement an ongoing dissemination and publication program on issues related to older adults as productive child care workers.

The successful inclusion of productively employed older adults in child care will depend on the degree to which employers are sensitive to the needs of their older and young workers and are willing to utilize resources such as these guidelines to support the creation of positive and supportive environs for all their workers. The possibility of providing enriching intergenerational experiences for young children and older adults is an exciting one for both the child care and the early childhood profession and the community of older persons seeking meaningful employment.

THE PROJECT SEQUENCE

1990: January - April

The project staff carried out the following steps:

- Identified and selected 40 task force members including professionals, academics, and practitioners;
- Identified and selected a 20-person working group responsible for preparing the guidelines and the manual;
- Collected from the task force, and analyzed, lists of issues related to productive employment of older adults in child care;
- Solicited 25 preliminary concept and review papers from task force members on the most frequently mentioned issues;
- Convened the working group in Washington, DC, to review issues and to discuss the guidelines' content;

1990: May - August

- Prepared a first draft of the guidelines and circulated it to all task force members for their comments;
- Convened a meeting in Harrisburg, PA, and invited all members of the working group who did not attend the first group meeting, directors of the field test sites, and several Pennsylvania state legislators;
- Prepared and circulated a revised version of the draft guidelines to all task force members;
- Identified four diverse child care sites to field test the guidelines: Newton Community Service Center, West Newton, MA; Department of Labor Child Development Center, Washington, DC; Francine Bunch Head Start Center, located in the Spanish American Civic Association, Lancaster, PA; and the Syracuse Developmental Center Day Care Center, Syracuse, NY;
- Met with site directors, signed agreements with the sites for field testing the guidelines, and contacted them regularly by telephone;

1990 - 91: September - April

- Visited each site twice to discuss guidelines' implementation, determine their effectiveness, and gather information for the manual;
- Revised the guidelines and circulated them for task force comments;

1991: May - July

- Met with the working group in Boston to review the first draft of the manual;
- Met with the entire working group in Pittsburgh to finalize the guidelines and discuss dissemination of the project print pieces;

1991: August - December

- Developed a dissemination plan;
- Printed the guidelines and began dissemination;
- Revised the manual and prepared for dissemination.

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FIELD SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Newton Community Service Center West Newton, MA

The Newton Community Service Center Day Care Center is a 17-year-old center located in suburban Boston, serving 142 children, who reflect a section of Newton's population. Most are white (approximately 10% are African-American, Hispanic, or Asian) with about half coming from low-income families and half from middle and upper income families. The center is housed in a renovated public school building, purchased in 1981.

To fulfill the goals of the project, the center hired one new older worker, as assistant teacher. An immigrant from the Soviet Union, she is a former newspaper and television journalist. A second older worker at the center was a retired employee of the Newton School District, who was working as an aide and substitute at the center when the project began. A third older worker was employed as an aide for part of the project period. She applied and was hired as an afternoon aide when this job became available.

Department of Labor Child Development Center, Washington, D.C.

The Department of Labor Child Development Center is located on the first floor of the Department of Labor (DOL) building in Washington, DC. Now 20 years old, the non-profit center is housed in DOL under the Congressional mandate for child care for Federal workers. The child care center is an independent, non-profit center whose employees are not Federal workers. DOL supplies space and services, while the center gives first priority to children of department employees. Most of the students and the staff are African-American.

Syracuse Developmental Center Day Care Center Syracuse, NY

This independent, non-profit center is located in a New York State-run center for persons with physical and mental disabilities. Seventy-five percent of the children served are the children of center employees. In return, the day care center receives free space, maintenance, security, and health care services from the developmental center. The day care center is in its tenth year and is licensed for 40 children. One-third of the students are minority, mostly African American, but also Hispanic and Asian. Some of the center's funds come through the N.Y. Labor Management Child Care Committee as part of the benefits package state employee labor unions negotiate with New York State.

The center had three older workers through Foster Grandparents, two of whom worked with infants and one with three-year-olds. They were hired into permanent positions since funds for regular unsubsidized positions were not available.

Child Development of Lancaster - Head Start Lancaster, PA

The Francine Bunch Memorial Head Start Center is located in the Spanish American Civic Association building (which also houses the Luis Munoz Marin Senior Center) in a largely Puerto Rican neighborhood in Lancaster. The Hispanic population in Lancaster represents Puerto Ricans populations who migrated from New York to Lancaster.

The 21-year-old center has a multi-ethnic staff and has a strong history of multicultural education within Head Start. The Center serves 80 children. Approximately 50% of the children are Hispanic (Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Cuban), 25% African-American, and 25% white. The program hired two older workers through Title V for the project, one Hispanic and one African-American.

Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
Child Development Associate

National Credentialing Program
Functional Areas for Preschool Caregivers
in Center-Based Programs*

1. **Safe:** Candidate provides a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries.
2. **Healthy:** Candidate promotes good health and nutrition and provides an environment that contributes to the prevention of illness.
3. **Learning Environment:** Candidate uses space, relationships, materials, and routines as resources for constructing an interesting, secure, and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration, and learning.
4. **Physical:** Candidate provides a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote the physical development of children.
5. **Cognitive:** Candidate provides activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children.
6. **Communication:** Candidate actively communicates with children and provides opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and non-verbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.
7. **Creative:** Candidate provides opportunities that stimulate children to play with sound, rhythm, language, materials, space, and ideas in individual ways and to express their creative abilities.
8. **Self:** Candidate provides physical and emotional development and emotional security for each child and helps each child to know, accept, and take pride in himself or herself and to develop a sense of independence.
9. **Social:** Candidate helps each child feel accepted in the group, helps children learn to communicate and get along with others, and encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults.
10. **Guidance:** Candidate provides a supportive environment in which children can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals as a group.
11. **Families:** Candidate maintains an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encourages their involvement in the program, and supports the child's relationship with his or her family.

12. **Program Management:** Candidate is a manager who uses all available resources to ensure an effective operation. The Candidate is a competent organizer, planner, record keeper, communicator, and a cooperative co-worker.
13. **Professionalism:** Candidate makes decisions based on knowledge of early childhood theories and practices, promotes quality in child care services, and takes advantage of opportunities to improve competence, both for personal and professional growth, and for the benefit of children and families.

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RESOURCES

FOR CHILDREN

ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

11141 Georgia Avenue, Suite 200
Wheaton, MD 20902
(310) 942-2443

Teachers, parents, and other adults in 31 countries interested in promoting good educational practices for children from infancy through early adolescence seek to promote the well being of all children in the home, in school, and in the community.

CHILD CARE EMPLOYEE PROJECT 6536 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 201A

Oakland, CA 94609
(415) 653-9889

Organization to improve salaries, working conditions, and status of child care workers and to increase public awareness about the importance of child care work and the training and skills it demands.

CDA - CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE NATIONAL CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

Council for Early Childhood
Professional Recognition,
1718 Connecticut Avenue, SW
Suite 500

Washington, DC 20009-1148
(202) 265-9090 or (800) 424-4310

The CDA programs train persons in the skills to be competent caregivers. The CDA Competency Standards define the skills needed by center-based child care staff, family day care providers, and home visitors.

CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

440 1st Street, NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 638-2952

Privately and publicly supported organization devoted to the improvement of care and services for deprived, dependent, or neglected children, youth, and their families. It provides consultation, conducts research, develops standards for services, and administers special projects.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN

1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 232-8777

Open to all individuals interested in serving and acting on behalf of the needs and rights of young children, with primary focus on educational services and resources.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILY DAY CARE

815 15th Street, NW, Suite 928,
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 347-3356

This national association is a membership group committed to improving the image of family day care and the quality of family day care programs.

**NATIONAL BLACK CHILD
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**
1023 15th Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC
(202) 328-1281

For the past twenty years, NBCDI has been committed to improving the quality of life for Black children. This national, nonprofit, educational organization focuses on the issues of child care, child welfare, health, and education. It is the only organization that works solely on behalf of Black children.

**SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION ON
CHILDREN UNDER SIX**
Box 5403 Brady Station
Little Rock, AR 72215
(501) 277-6404

The Southern Association on Children Under Six (SACUS) is an organization of over 16,000 educators, child care professionals, and other persons interested in quality child care and education. These individuals are mostly residents of 13 southern states.

**ADMINISTRATION ON AGING,
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT
AND POLICY**
330 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201
(202) 619-0641

Provides a variety of services and publications for the elderly and those serving the elderly. Assists State Units on Aging with grants and providing a national network.

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF RETIRED PERSONS**
601 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049
(202) 872-4700

Develops publications and programs to help older people live independently and productively. Publishes *Modern Maturity* magazine and other publications on aging, health, and intergenerational programs. Extensive library with materials on aging.

**ASOCIACION NACIONAL PRO
PESONAS MAYORES**
3325 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 800
Los Angeles, CA 90010
(213) 487-1922

Articulates the needs of Hispanic and other low-income elderly, and administers the Senior Community Service Employment Project, funded by the Department of Labor, which provides employment to low-income people over 55 years of age.

**FOR
OLDER
WORKERS**

**FOSTER GRANDPARENT
PROGRAM - ACTION**
1100 Vermont Avenue, NW,
Room 6100
Washington, DC 20525
(202) 634-9349

Sponsored by the federal agency ACTION, the program pairs "special needs" children with low-income people over 60. Based in non-profit organizations that have expressed a need for volunteer help, the program is currently run in 270 sites. Volunteers undergo 40 hours of training before being matched with one or more children for one-on-one relationships. Volunteers receive a tax-free stipend of \$2.35 an hour for a 20 hour a week commitment, limited medical coverage, and transportation reimbursement.

GREEN THUMB
2000 North 14th Street, Suite 800
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 522-7272

Provides job placement services, training, and part-time community service employment for low-income, unemployed persons 55 years of age and older.

**JOB TRAINING
PARTNERSHIP ACT (JTPA)
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
ADMINISTRATION**
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210
(202) 523-4486

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, provides job training and related assistance to economically disadvantaged individuals, including seniors.

**NATIONAL ACTION FORUM FOR
MIDLIFE AND OLDER WOMEN**
Box 816
Stony Brook, NY 11790

People concerned with upgrading the quality of life for women over 40. Supports the development of a broad spectrum of services and resources designed to enhance the quality of life for women in their later years.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF OLDER WORKER
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**
(Division of NCoA)
600 Maryland Avenue, SW
West Wing 100
Washington, DC 20024
(202) 479-1200

Purposes are to improve employment opportunities for older workers, promote understanding of older workers' capabilities, and dispel myths about older workers.

**NATIONAL CAUCUS AND CENTER
ON BLACK AGED, INC**
1424 K Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 637-8400

An interracial membership organization devoted to improving the economic status and quality of life for low-income and minority elderly. Monitors all legislation and program guidelines relating to services for the elderly.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL
ON THE AGING**
600 Maryland Avenue, SW
West Wing 100
Washington, DC 20024
(800) 424-9046 or (202) 479-1200

Professional organization provides training, conducts research, advocates for the elderly, and publishes numerous materials, including bi-monthly *Perspectives on Aging*.

OLDER WOMEN'S LEAGUE
730 11th Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 783-6686

Primary issues include access to health care insurance, support for family caregivers, access to jobs, and pensions for older women.

**RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER
PROGRAM - ACTION**
1100 Vermont Avenue, NW
Room 6100
Washington, DC 20525
(202) 634-9349

Recruitment, orientation, training, and support of volunteers nationwide. Involved in a variety of intergenerational activities: volunteers in schools, Just Say No clubs, intergenerational assistance projects.

**TITLE V: SENIOR COMMUNITY
SERVICE EMPLOYMENT
PROGRAM**

Comprises eight employment programs organized under Title V of the Older Americans Act and funded by the Federal Government. Provides on-the-job training for workers 55 years of age and older who are economically disadvantaged. Individual programs are sponsored by American Association of Retired persons, National Council of Senior Citizens, National Urban League, National Council on the Aging, National Caucus and Center on Black Aging, Green Thumb, Asociacion Nacional pro Personas Mayores, and the United States Forest Service.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR -
THE WOMEN'S BUREAU**
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210
(202) 523-4486

Offers employers information on child care and eldercare services. They have also established a clearinghouse on Implementation of Child Care and Eldercare Services.

EXAMPLES FROM FIELD TEST SITES

APPENDICES G -1 THRU G - 6

Newton Community Service Centers, Inc.
West Newton, Massachusetts

Recruitment Plan for Hiring Older Workers

- Make contact with local programs that provide services to the elderly.e.g.
 - Newton Elder Affairs
 - Newton Department of Human Services
 - R.S.V.P. program
 - Family Counseling Services
 - Church Groups - Synagogue Groups
 - Women's Clubs
 - Refugee Service Organizations
- Find a person (program director or counselor) with whom you can establish regular contact
- Send program brochures describing your program to the above groups
- Send job descriptions with brochures
- Have program representative attend meetings of groups interested in your program and in job opportunities
- Make name and numbers of other day care centers available for those who need a more central employment location.

Newton Community Service Centers, Inc.
West Newton, Massachusetts

Job Description for Teacher Aide

The Teacher Aide shall assist the Teacher in all duties and will accept direction in the implementation of curriculum and schedules.

Duties include, but are not limited to:

- Reading stories to individual children or small groups
- Snack preparation
- Helping children with clothes
- Helping children with toileting
- Doing table activities project supervision
- Clean-up duties (with other staff)

The Teacher Aide is expected to follow directions from the Teacher regarding all activities and the supervision of children. Teacher Aide will be supervised by the Head Teacher and will attend the Teacher Aide support group.

Newton Community Service Centers, Inc.
West Newton, Massachusetts

Staff Questionnaire

Older Workers' Integration into the Center

This meeting of all the day care staff was organized preceding the coming on staff of our first fully paid older staff member. Our agency's specialist in geriatric affairs - a person widely familiar with intergenerational activities - and I conducted this meeting. There was active discussion and much interest. Staff were pleased to have their views aired and validated.

I enclose the questionnaires that staff had previously completed. They speak for themselves. I presented these to them in preparation for our staff meeting and to have anonymous responses so that I could ascertain whatever misapprehensions staff might have.

Issues/Concerns:

Generated at staff meeting

- Older people are more vulnerable physically and emotionally (feelings could be more easily hurt)
- Parental attitudes
- Could be vast differences in one "older adult" from another
- Concerns about who would supervise whom
- Younger people more resilient than older
- Connect older workers with R.S.V.P. workers.

Newton Community Service Centers, Inc.
West Newton, Massachusetts

Staff Questionnaire

Older Workers' Integration into the Center

TO: All Day Care Staff

FROM: Havi

DATE: August 13, 1990

As many of you may already know, N.C.S.C. Day Care is involved in a project with the University of Pittsburgh called "Generations Together." The project is geared to incorporate older workers on day care staffs. Please be good enough to fill out this brief questionnaire. You do not need to put your name on it. We will be discussing these questions together at a staff meeting the 2nd week of September.

Older Adult = 55 plus

Make your answers brief - or if you desire - use extra paper.

Thank you for your participation.

Staff Questionnaire

1. I would enjoy working with an older adult in my room.
Reason -
2. I would hesitate to work with an older adult.
Reason -
3. I have had positive past experiences in working situations with older adults.
Describe briefly -
4. I have had no working experience with older adults.
Check here if no ____.
5. I have had negative experiences working with older adults.
Describe briefly -
6. Please record in a few sentences your feelings about our participation in the project.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

CIRCLE THE HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Name and Location of **BUSINESS, TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL** attended.

Major _____
Dates Attended _____ Degree Rec'd _____
From _____ To _____ Date Received _____

Major _____
Dates Attended _____ Degree Rec'd _____
From _____ To _____ Date Received _____

Name and Location of **COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY** attended. (Or attach a copy of transcripts)

Major _____
Minor _____
Dates Attended _____ Degree Rec'd _____
From _____ To _____ Date _____
List chief undergraduate subjects: _____

Major _____
Minor _____
Dates Attended _____ Degree Rec'd _____
From _____ To _____ Date _____
List chief undergraduate subjects: _____

Please list any other special qualifications you possess:

REFERENCES

LIST THREE PERSONS NOT RELATED TO YOU WHO CAN FURNISH INFORMATION. PLEASE INCLUDE ONE CHARACTER REFERENCE AND REFERENCES FROM TWO PERSONS WHO HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR CAPABILITIES TO FILL THE POSITION FOR WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING. PLEASE DO NOT REPEAT THE NAMES OF SUPERVISORS FURNISHED IN YOUR EMPLOYMENT HISTORY.

Full Name	Business/Home address	Occupation	Telephone #

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

(Begin with the most recent position held)

NAME OF ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE _____

SUPERVISOR _____ TELEPHONE _____

EMPLOYMENT DATES: FROM _____ TO _____ JOB TITLE _____

SALARY: STARTING _____ FINAL _____

DUTIES _____

REASON FOR LEAVING _____

NAME OF ORGANIZATION _____

ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE _____

SUPERVISOR _____ TELEPHONE _____

EMPLOYMENT DATES: FROM _____ TO _____ JOB TITLE _____

SALARY: STARTING _____ FINAL _____

DUTIES _____

REASON FOR LEAVING _____

OTHER EXPERIENCE YOU WOULD LIKE US TO KNOW ABOUT YOU

LIST ANY PROFESSIONAL OR VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH YOU BELONG:

LIST ANY CERTIFICATES, AWARDS, PUBLISHED ARTICLES, ETC.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS BEST AS YOU CAN.

There are no right or wrong answers

1. What were you like as a child?
2. What kind of children interest you most?
3. As a child development worker, what would you do if a parent insists you spank his/her child for having accidents because "he/she knows better"?
4. What means of discipline do you think is appropriate for a two-year old who spits in another's face?
What would you do for a four-year old child?
5. How would you handle a situation where you found a girl and boy in the bathroom examining each other's sex parts?

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

6. A child is unhappy when...

7. Teachers need...

8. Parents who enroll children in Child Development Centers should not.....

9. The best pre-school programs are those that...

10. Working with children is... but

11. Assistant teachers should not...

12. The area I like best is the ...
because

PLEASE COMMENT ON THE FOLLOWING:

Father's comment after seeing child in housekeeping corner: "Take that wig off and don't put it on again!"

Teacher during an art activity: "Susan, do yours over because cows aren't purple."

Assistant to Teacher: "Mrs. Jones, I have to leave; I just have to leave for a minute. I can't take it any longer."

Sketch a classroom design for 12 four-year olds. At the bottom or on the back of this sheet, indicate the four items you would most want to have as their teacher/assistant teacher.

I CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Signature

Date

Department Of Labor Child Development Center

Job Description

POSITION: Assistant Teacher

Educational Requirements

- Preferably 2 years college, including at least 15 semester hours credit in Early Childhood and minimum of 1 year of experience working with young children under the direct supervision of professional staff.

or

- Successful completion of formal training program in Early Childhood Education **and** minimum of 2 years working with young children under the direct supervision of professional staff.

General Requirements

- Physical ability to do the work;
- Good personal cleanliness habits;
- Current Health Certificate;
- Ability to speak acceptable English;
- Reliable and conscientious attitude in accepting and carrying out assigned duties;
- Willingness to participate in staff development training and on-the-job training;
- Compassion and understanding of the general nature of children, and the ability to positively relate to young children;
- Ability to relate to parents on a day-to-day basis.

Overview of Responsibilities

Assistant Teachers work directly in the classroom with the Teacher. They are responsible for participating in all aspects of program planning and implementation, but final responsibility rests with the Classroom Teacher. Assistant Teachers are directly supervised by Classroom Teachers.

Specific Responsibilities

- Participates in all aspects of classroom planning and management;
- Assist the Teacher in preparation of weekly lesson plans;
- Available to children, responding appropriately to encourage them to share experiences, ideas, and feelings; listen to them with attention and respect;

Department Of Labor Child Development Center

Job Description

- Speak with children in a friendly, positive, courteous manner; converse frequently with children, asking open-ended questions; and speak individually to children (as opposed to the whole group) most of the time;
- Assist children to be comfortable, relaxed, happy, and involved in play and other activities; encourage children to verbalize feelings and ideas;
- Use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, anticipation of and elimination of potential problems; positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism; refrain from physical punishment or other embarrassing or intimidating discipline techniques;
- Help children with self-help skills; assist them with clean-up and with toileting;
- Treat children of all races, religions and cultures with equal respect and consideration;
- Interact frequently with children; express respect for and affection toward children, appropriately smiling, touching, holding, and speaking to children at their eye level throughout the day, particularly on arrival and departure, and when diapering or feeding very young children;
- Perform equal share of classroom and Center housekeeping duties; as outlined by the Director;
- Attend staff development and training workshops as required by the Director to keep abreast of the child development areas;
- Attend all scheduled Center staff meetings, contributing appropriately;
- Coordinate with Classroom Teacher regarding any problem(s);
- Alert the Classroom Teacher to any problem(s) a child may be having, or any problem with parents; consult with Teacher on best procedure for sharing problems with parents;
- Supervise children in the classroom when the teacher is not in the room;
- Assist Teacher in maintaining a safe, attractive and stimulating classroom environment;
- Offer suggestions for classroom activities, art projects, field trips, etc.;
- Establish a positive relationship with all parents;
- Assist the Teacher during routines; eat with children during mealtimes and encourage them to service themselves; supervise children during nap; assist during outdoor time;

Department Of Labor Child Development Center

Job Description

- Assist the Teacher in conducting parent conferences;
- Assist the Teacher in conducting observations of the children; recording progress and noting problems;
- Keep all personal information about children, families and staff confidential, except when sharing for professional purposes;
- Represent **critical** areas in which employee must rate satisfactorily.

GENERATIONS TOGETHER: A JOB TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR OLDER WORKERS IN CHILD CARE

by Thomas B. Smith, Cheryl Mack, and Ethel Tittnich

A publication from

Generations Together: An Intergenerational Studies Program Intergenerational Early Childhood Program

Generations Together offers a one-of-a-kind employment training curriculum that enables older adults to enter the child care profession as skilled entry-level caregivers.

Child care providers, like employers in many other fields, are beginning to understand that the workforce of the twenty-first century will consist in large part of older adults. The curriculum is specifically designed to provide older adults with the knowledge and skills they will need to become effective, professional child care staff members.

This 22-module, 115-hour course is enriched by a supervised, hands-on practicum experience. The field-tested curriculum is grounded in child development theory and widely-accepted child care competencies, and presented using older adult learning strategies.

The curriculum is officially approved by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition as satisfying the eligibility criteria for Child Development Associates (CDA) certification.

It can be used by child care and Head Start trainers, vocational trainers, teachers, college and university faculty, older adult groups, and community agencies.

The curriculum is available now as part of a Generations Together consultation and training package, which includes technical assistance in developing and maintaining an intergenerational child care training model. The curriculum is being published in conjunction with Syracuse University Press and will be available separately in the Spring of 1993.

For more information about Generations Together and GENERATIONS TOGETHER: A JOB TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR OLDER WORKERS IN CHILD CARE, contact:

The Intergenerational Early Childhood Program
Coordinators Thomas Smith or Cheryl Mack (412) 648-7150

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Module 1
ORIENTATION

Module 2
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Module 3
VALUES AND ATTITUDES

Module 4
CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Module 5
DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Module 6
**THE ROLE OF OBSERVATION IN
CHILD CARE**

Module 7
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Module 8
DEVELOPING OBSERVATION SKILLS

Module 9
**AGE-APPROPRIATE PROGRAM
PLANNING**

Module 10
**UNDERSTANDING CLASSROOM
MANAGEMENT**

Module 11
POSITIVE GUIDANCE: THEORY

Module 12
POSITIVE GUIDANCE: PRACTICE

Module 13
JOB SEARCH SKILLS

Module 14
PLAY IN CAREGIVING SETTINGS

Module 15
ART

Module 16
WATER, SAND, AND CLAY

Module 17
**BLOCKS, CONSTRUCTION TOYS,
AND WOODWORKING**

Module 18
MATH AND SCIENCE

Module 19
MUSIC AND MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Module 20
**CHILDREN'S BOOKS
IN THE CLASSROOM**

Module 21
COMMUNICATING WITH ADULTS

Module 22
PROFESSIONALISM

PRACTICUM TRACK SEMINARS

The curriculum includes a practicum experience, which gives students the opportunity to receive 35-40 hours of on-the-job-training at selected early childhood centers. In a separate series of practicum seminars, trainees integrate the classroom theory from the modules with their experience in the field.

**Generations Together:
An Intergenerational Studies Program**

University of Pittsburgh
121 University Place - Suite 300
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

GENERATIONS TOGETHER

An Intergenerational Studies Program

Sally Newman, Ph.D.

Executive Director

University Center for Social and Urban Research

The purpose of Generations Together is to create opportunities for intergenerational experiences that promote growth and understanding between the generations. To fulfill this purpose, Generations Together:

1. Develops innovative intergenerational programs as models for replication;
2. Conducts research on the effects of intergenerational programs on the participants and their communities;
3. Assists agencies and systems to develop their own intergenerational programs;
4. Publishes and disseminates information on the development and outcomes of intergenerational programs;
5. Facilitates a support network among agencies involved in intergenerational programs; and
6. Encourages public and social policies which foster intergenerational activity.

For additional information, contact:

Generations Together

University Center for Social and Urban Research

University of Pittsburgh
121 University Place, Suite 300
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

(412)648-7150

Fax (412)624-4810



University of Pittsburgh